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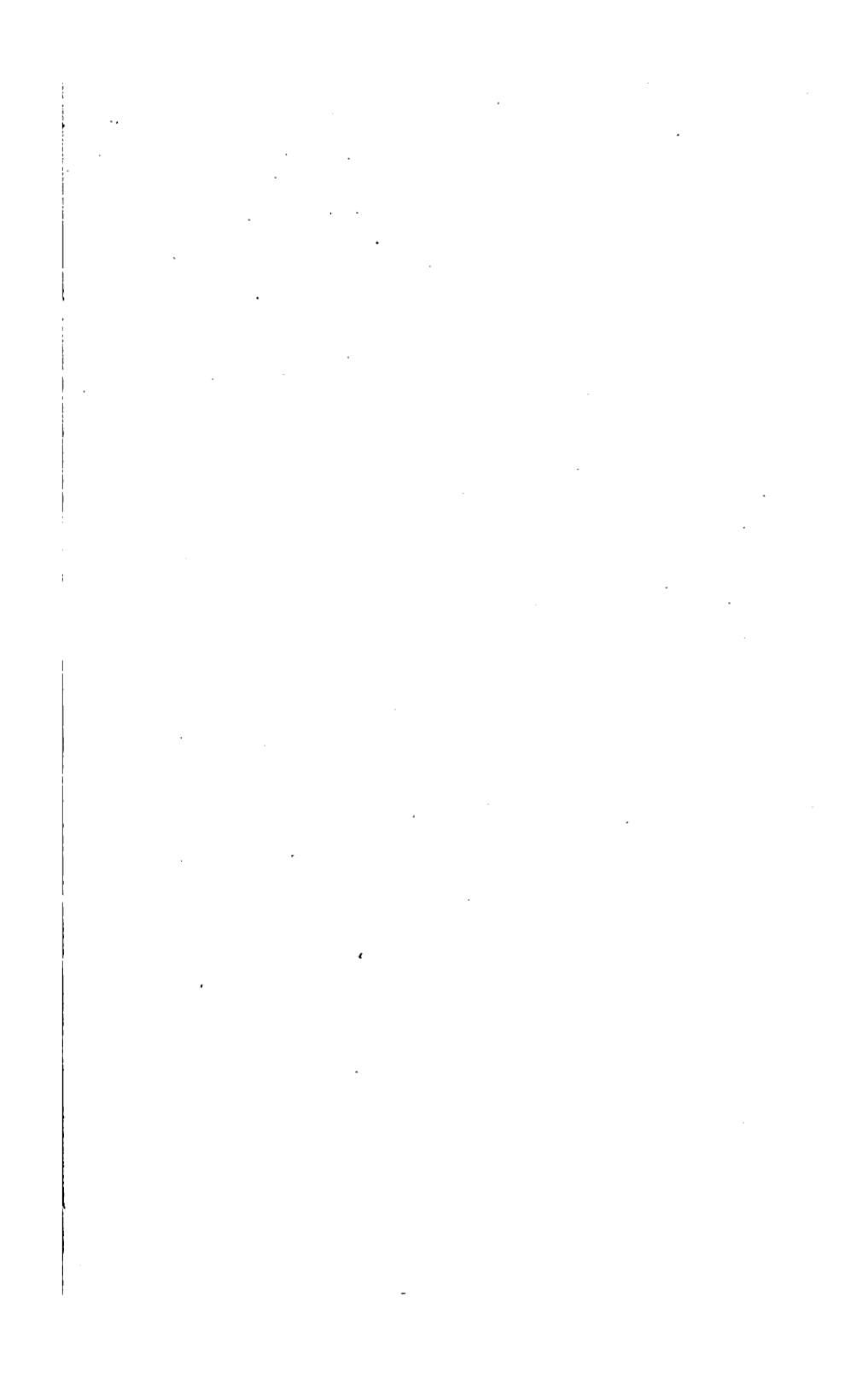
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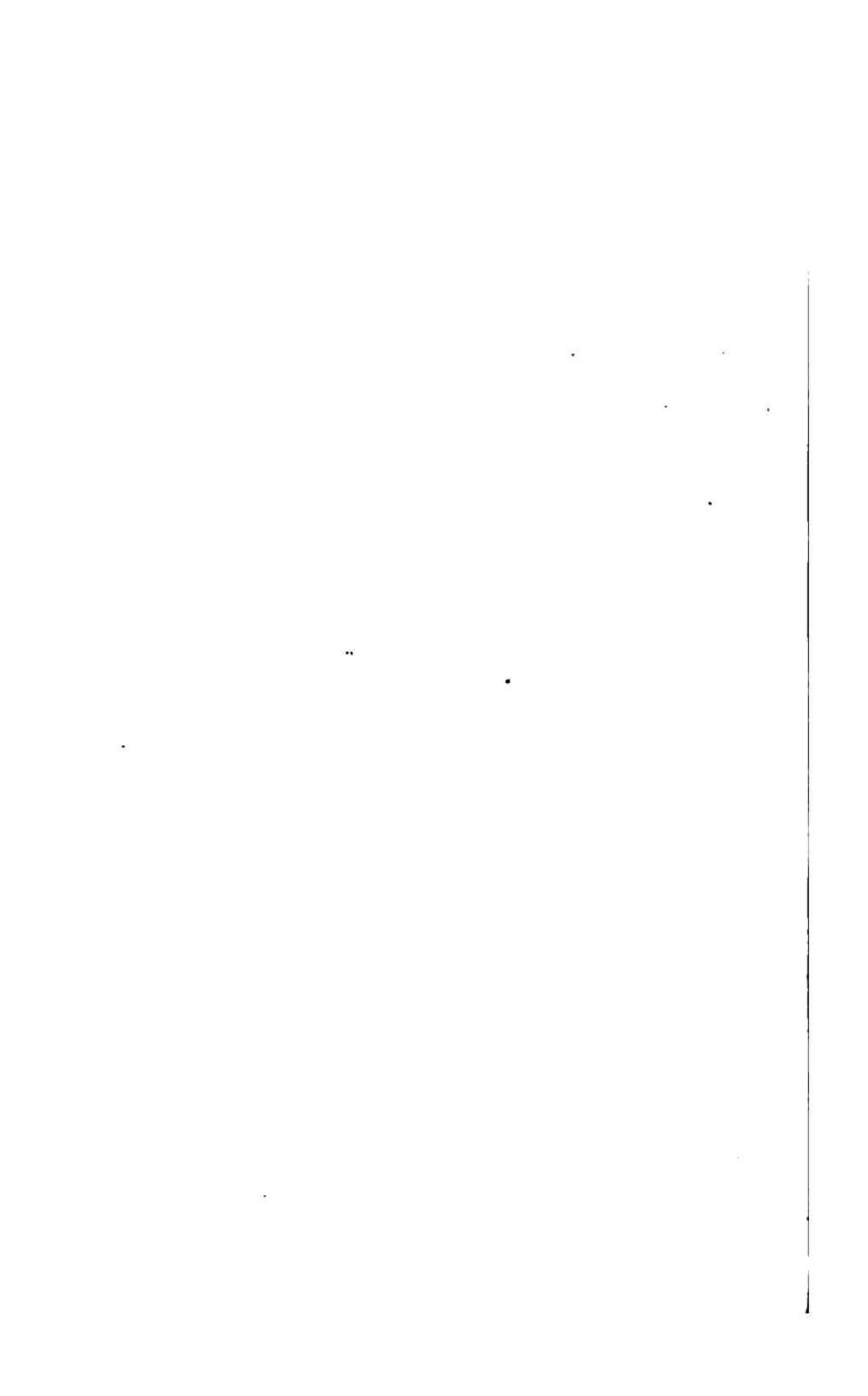
Ille velut fidis arcana sodalibus olim
Credebat libris ; neque, si male cesserat, unquam
Decurrentis alio, neque si bene : quo fit ut omnis
Votiva pateat velut descripta tabelle
Vita senie.



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BOOK I.

THE PUBLIC WAY.—RETURNING FROM MARKET.—A COUNTRY GIRL.—A SNOWY MORNING.—THE FORGE.—CONVERSATION THERE.—A PROPHET IN HIS OWN COUNTRY.—FOREIGN BIRDS.—THE SITE OF AN ANCIENT CHURCH.—THE PRIEST'S VISIT TO “THE WHOLE.”—THE CHURCHMAN'S FAMILY.—THE DISSENTER.—SCHOOLBOYS ON A FROSTY DAY.—THE PRIEST'S VISIT TO THE SCHOOL.—PERAMBULATIONS IN SPRING.—WATER.—A SUMMER EVENING.—MORNING IN SEPTEMBER.—THE FALL OF THE LEAF.—CONCLUSION OF THE BOOK.

Perambulations.

My song is of myself and of the things
Which make my little world. The world's annoy
Will vex less keenly, and life's sorrows wear
A softer aspect, viewed in poetic thought's
Beguiling visions ; which, although none else
They charm, when verse hath slowly featured them,
Charm him from all solicitude besides,
Who watches while they come and pass away.
And even pleasure's smile will seem more pleased,
The fancy colouring all that it surveys ;
So have I seen the sunny woodlands shine
With softer tints—the glades and the green lanes—
When viewed through optic glass,—and tender lights
Sleep on the dreamy landscape so espied.

From the town's terraced heights, embowered in shade,

To distant Neagh's lake, stretches a road
Of much resort : fast by, and as a bound,
Stands my low cabin wall, home of my cares
And joys. Like him, remembered in the tale
Of the old bard of rocky Chios' isle,
I dwell in houses by the way ; though not
Like him, in living rich, and loved by men,
Because all shared his hospitable love.

Along, in progress to the distant town,
Pour, in continuous stream, the precious fruits
With which earth chiefly nurtures life ; a wealth
More blest than India or Peru, with doubtful toil,
Wins from its silver or its diamond mines ;—
Kidneys of wheat, in high-piled sacks, and oats,
Close cased in pointed husk,—the tuberous roots
That poorly feed green Erin's isle,—and long
And lithe oziers for baskets, or to bind the thatch
Against blustering winter,—eggs in curious pile,
And fatted fowls, of all the noisy tribes
That search the farm-yard for their daily food.

But passengers we have of other worth—
Those who collect these riches from the earth,
And guide the horny hands that till the soil ;
Who to the field appropriate seeds assign,
Fat oxen at the stall, rear the stout horse,
Which, from the ignoble cart or plough released,
Bears now a stately load. A vast expanse
Of hat crowns the broad visage ; purple-red
The cheeks ; the coat of broadcloth blue or brown,
Save where proud claims of greater dignity
Invest the outward man with cleric black.

A difference is, whether this figure goes
 Town-ward, or home returns: going, he rides,
 While early morning shines, sedate and grave,—
 Gain all his thought, in social conversation shrewd,
 On price of corn, or oxen, nags, or swine;
 And of the damage from the teeming rains
 To hay on uplands, or the natural grass.
 Coming at evening late, his stirrups stay
 Unequal pressures, as he sways oblique
 Under that influence strange, which lurks in malt.
 Or, if of less pretension, and less wealth,
 Of fewer years, in saddle more secure,
 He haply rides a race after full cups.
 Dread sounds the trampling of his coming on;
 Past is he like a whirlwind; while behind
 Lags his now distanced fellow, and resigns
 The competition with an envious smile.
 More wary, he had spied the hill's descent,
 And thought it dangerous with the well-known knees.
 The foremost, hearing at his heels no more
 The rival clattering of heavy hoofs,
 Draws bridle gladly against the farther hill.
 These merry holidays their beasts shall rue,
 Worse than the sober labours of the farm.

While thus I catch our highway's passing show,
 Let not the rustic Muse, ungrateful, fail
 To note with finest pen, on fairest page,
 The neatness, and the use of female care:—
 The basket's border, eaved around with leaves
 Of freshest green, which line the sides within,
 And in their dewy coolness, shelter safe
 Butter of kine, in forms of blunted prism;
 Or lozenge-shaped, impressed with mimic stamp

Of other leaves; or, with some strange device
Of uncouth carver's skill fantastical,
Its coarse lines serving more to indicate
The brittle softness it had rudely kissed.
The treasured sweetness in its little bower
Savours of richest grasses and clear streams;
Its colour purer than the virgin gold,
And fair as morning light upon a cloud,
While yet it mixes with th' exhaling dew;
Clean linen's dazzling whiteness shades the whole.
So sweet a burthen I this morning saw,
When the sun scarce had risen; and marked the attire
Of her who bare it, and her gentle looks—
A figure of the woman's justest height,
Her golden locks, her cheek, her forehead fair,
Her dress of russet brown, bordered around
The neck with snowy muslin delicate,
And this too tied with soft and shining silk;
Below, the stockings white and glossy shoes,
Whose lustre stain nor dimness had derived;
For still night's moisture lay upon the dust,
Meshing its stir beneath her gentle step.
Hail! holy innocence of female life!
Which sanctifies the household and the hearth
Of low-born countrymen—which learns and aids
A mother's cares domestic—order keeps,
And neatness spreads within poor cottage walls,
That a dear father's eye, from toils a-field
Returned, may kindle with a sense of joy,
Caught from the brightness of his shining hearth.
And when sad sorrow comes, or heavy years,
Who like to thee can soothe the pained heart,
Or thoughtful watch, unwearied, not unworn,

To anticipate the wants of slow disease !
 The brothers' manners too soften near thee,
 And strip, even here, their surly rudeness off,
 Insensibly acquiring gentle arts,
 And delicate attentions. On thy hand,
 And faithful care, the failing mother leans ;
 And smiles paternal, mixed with pity's tear,
 Show purest semblance of the love Divine.

The fields are white, and a shrill western wind
 Drives the small snow in light and starry points
 Athwart the landscape—busy all the air.
 These fallen, like cold, unsocial neighbourhood,
 Lie near, and yet refuse to mix in the hand.
 The hard road, thinly coated, shows, near walls
 And overhanging hedges, infant forms
 Of the rude, shapeless drift, which wheels ere long,
 May not attempt to pass ; and, even now,
 The young ice creeping o'er the broad mill-pond
 Gathers the falling whiteness ; frost hath griped
 The dry and beaten way with iron fang—
 The storm will last, if the swain's saw say true.
 While thus the wintry morn breathes chill without,
 Pleased infancy sits smiling at my feet
 In the warm brightness of the fire ; and oft
 He asks for breakfast with imperfect words ;
 And it is joy to hear his prattling haste,
 And importunity. The groves in spring
 Delight the sense with melody of birds ;
 But yet no song of birds sounds to my ear
 Sweet as the music of thy voice, my child !
 After the dimness of day's earlier hours,
 The snow-drift ceases, and the clouds disperse ;
 And see ! the sun-shine glitters on the hills ;

But though the sun-light on the hills be glad,
Yet, to my eyes, more glad the light of thine.
• And now no further may my morning meal,
Idly prolonged, detain me loitering ;
But I must find the couch where sickness pines,
Wishful to hear Religion's hallowed voice :
The kindling eye, triumphant over pain,
Thus looks abroad through the bare, cankered bars
Of life's old, joyless mansion, with the glance
Of hope serene. So the poor captive sits
In dreary tower, lone piled on rock-bound shore,
And counts the throbbing pulses, numberless,
Which restless beat below ; and sees, far off,
Bright, sunny lands, where men are free ; and marks
The boundless ocean play, in health and joy,
Amidst the glories and fresh breath of morn ;
And listens to the merry boatman's song,
Who hath begun his day in hope, and eyes
The clear, blue heaven, as on the oar he leans,
With looks of laughing gladness. Pleasant thoughts
Steal through the captive's soul, in spite of woe,
While day-spring lights his chamber with a smile.
Alas ! for them whose sickness hath no nurse,
Save squalid poverty ! What scenes of grief
'Tis mine to witness, though not mine to cheer,
Where wealth should open wide a liberal hand,
And deem the warm repose, and sheltered home,
The clean and bright fire-side, and thankful heart
Of honest poverty and feeble age,
And pain relieved, and sickness' load laid down,
(Or, with no other care but those it brings—
The body's sorrow, and soul's penitence)—
More joy than all the dazzling glare of plate,

Reflected round at some high feast in hall,
 Where tables shine with silver radiance—lamps
 Hang from the gilded ceilings—wax-lights burn,
 Pure as the ore that shrines their flame on high,
 Amidst a little heaven of crystal stars;—
 More than the savoury meats—more than the wines'
 Aroma, from the plains of France the fair,
 Yields the experienced palate ;—more endures
 That odour, stealing o'er the secret soul,
 At moments when it looked not for such sense,
 Than Persia's rose-beds exquisite express ;
 And for it, well exchanged these costly things,
 Which perish in the use, since that shall bathe
 The amaranthine crown from Christ's right hand.

This morn I hastened to a bed of pain,—
 A little straw heaped near the cold hearth-stone,
 Where one green branch, which showed some touch
 of fire,
 Smouldering, sent up a thin, blue breath of smoke,
 Small as the traveller's on the frosty air.
 As passed the vapour, spirit-like, abroad,
 It scarce obscured the light of the bleak heaven,
 Where near o'er head, the open roof poured down
 A chilly brightness on the famished cheek.
 Here, fading life lay smitten to the ground ;
 No covering wrapped the limbs, save some thin rags,
 Which had sufficed for day, when health was strong,
 And exercise, that keeps the streams so clear,
 Opening free current for the bounding blood,
 Warmth's artificial aids were needed less ;
 Though how the shrewdly biting winter's breath,
 That keen and snell is tyrant of the air
 Beneath the insensate reign of silent night,

Suffers pale sleep—that loves soft, curtained beds,
 And vestures heaped i' the cold—to rest, where hard
 She lies upon the ground, in hovel bare,
 In daylight's scant attire, to me is unknown.
 And this was one whose toil had daily earned
 Her bread from stern society's cold hand :
 She owed man but her love—a debt with heaven
 Which many waters could not drown. Her love
 Survived her destitution, and the world
 Was debtor unto her for all her days,
 Her young and golden days, tasked in the extreme,
 To work its wants—which had sucked out
 Too soon life's energies ;—age came apace,
 And blood was thin, and the rind cast away.*

Passing, I hear the ponderous anvil's clang
 In dusky forge : harmonious fall the blows
 Upon the stubborn bar, and streaming sparks
 Die, like the falling stars, of moment life,
 In blackest darkness, and for ever lost.
 And I bethink me of that giant brood,
 Who, as "is sung in ancient minstrelsy,"
 Peopled the caves of *Ætna* ; of their works,
 The thunderbolt for Jove, and car of Mars,
 And Pallas' dreadful *Ægis* ; and their toil
 With brawny shoulders bowed, in equal share,
 Lifting their arms to measure, while they turned
 The ore with griping pincers. Here, one hand
 Plies firm the breathing bellows' polished horn,
 Panting, while slow they labour ; the other stirs
 The angry fire, roused fierce from idle sleep
 Beneath black cinders hid ; or turns the bar,

* This passage was written before the year 1830.

Plunging it deeper in devouring flame.
And other workmen lean, the interval,
Upon the great sledge-hammer, and the news
Of all the village circles merry round :
Small farmers there, careful of half-fed nag,
Or old ; and hinds, who gladly loiter o'er
The winter's day beside the smithy fire,
While broken irons suffer due repair,
And masters fret at understood delay ;
And little barefoot boys, perched round on high,
Enjoy the comforts of the warm hearth-stone.
The blear-eyed Vulcans serve the waiting swains,
Each in his turn, and with a lordly will,
Dispense to their levee attentions bland :
And if their merry talk be much of fairs,
And of horse ailments, or their price, or hoofs,
Of neighbour's lapse, or of his land's success,
Or much neglect; or of the Vicar's faults
In desk or pulpit, or in pastoral cares,
And how their betters let their envy work
In action toward each other, into light ;
And all with terse remark, and biting jest,
And sarcasm keen, and coarse, unguarded wit,—
Is theirs, chosen more wisely—or its worth,
Or wit, or reach aught higher, who sit round
Their polished tables, and the evening fire,
And ruddy wines, or cups of stronger drink,
And dogs and horses are their descent sole,
And saucy grooms who ride their races well,
And luckless wight excluded from their club,
And therefore a convenient mark of tongues,
Or churchman's obstinate, unwelcome zeal.
Not happy he, who, born of humble stock,

And poor, yet loving the society
Of minds, hath priesthood's charge, where, few
descents
Removed from his sire's rank, some rich man reigns.
The lawful rule his office hath unswayed—
He may, indeed, float tranquilly—a log
That idly swims upon a weedy sea;
Or, if he will commend such luxury
Of doctrine as shall swell the secret pride
Of sectaries in the church, who fence themselves
In precincts pure, where none besides may come,
And fain would think the gracious light of heaven
Shines only on their heads, in little stall
Of high and jealous pale,—he then may look
For bounteous courtesies, and the reproach
Will help to warrant, too, that the reformed
Resort to church to hear sweet flatteries.
But, as the Apostle gave Christ's bishops charge—
Enjoin men to be true, to pay their debts,
Obey their masters' and their monarch's will,
Respect their oaths, do justice, and give alms
For Christ's sake and reward—you bring no news;
And, that men may the more comfort Christ's poor.
Or to subdue a lust, or aid a prayer,
Teach to deny themselves, as doth the Church
And fast, and to forbear full tables oft—
Such crabbed doctrine is the pride of Rome.
Alas! the poor man of a steadfast faith
To Holy Church, must dwell apart, content
To look for joy in learned volume used,
Or in the care of pleasant garden-ground,
Or duteous walks by highways, bridle-roads,
O'er moor and hill, mountain, or sunny down,

To distant township, where the sick man lies,
 The busy pen may fix some pleasant thoughts,
 And on this wing, a Daedalus he flies
 From cares at home, or through the mouths of men,
 Consorting the swift flight of winged time.

One such I knew, who willing had renounced
 All social intercourse at layman's board,
 Because he heard that they had begged for him
 The country round, at sordid rich man's hall,
 That some attentions might, for pity's sake,
 Be shown the poor mean man—a breakfast meal
 At times, in charity of etiquette.

Alas ! smooth contumely measured thus
 Is more offensive than their studied hate.
 And yet the man had sense, was scholarly,
 Honest enough, and gentle towards the poor,
 And taught from youth much deference to the great;
 Haply too much :—and those who used him so,
 A learned clerk, were neither lettered, great,
 Nor noble ; nor his rank, if not preferred,
 Distinguishable at bright honour's source
 From prime of theirs. But yet his cultured mind
 And manners fair might not compensate them
 For humbleness of birth from blameless men,
 Because they saw its homeliness too near.
 Not different, honest Skelton, was thy lot—
 His ancestor—before the ungenerous world
 Had read thy virtue, and thy manly sense,
 In pages writ that Faith might treasure them :
 And even He who bare our sins away,
 With feeling touched of our infirm estate,
 And need of comfort in a naughty world,
 Hath meekly testified the ungrateful truth,

That not unhonoured is a prophet's name,
 Save in his native land and early home.
 'Tis thus of things familiar to our use,
 We take no note, or only to contemn,
 Like bounties frequent with man's gratitude :
 But the remote still seems of worth the more ;
 As figures, seen upon a bare hill-top,
 Placed far above our heads, and next the sky,
 With nought of earth between, show to the sight
 Deceived, of larger size, and nobler form ;
 And men admire the idol they have made,
 As ancient Rome brought blocks from o'er the sea
 Of shapeless stone, and called them holy gods.

And yet, ye feathered kinds, not less unjust
 Am I to you ; and watch, with curious eye,
 Your wilder natures, and of stranger wing—
 More pleased that they are strange, or little known.
 The Swedish peasant, by his frozen lakes,
 Scarce views the tribes that aye remain with him,
 With interest great as mine in those that trust
 To instinct irresistible their flight
 O'er ocean's lonely wastes ; surer to reach
 Than seaman's course by compass or the stars.
 They lodge close hid around our stagnant pools,
 And, fond of the concealment of the reeds
 And clumpy rushes of the marsh, enjoy,
 On open waters, or more pervious ground
 To their perpetual search for reptile food,
 A milder winter than that Borean clime.
 The dark-green teal swims cautious on the lake,
 The diver much alone, and wild-duck's brood
 Breasting the tiny wave with angular fleet,
 Like that which brake the lines of Trafalgar.

The wood-cock, that arrives from foreign land
Still after set of sun, lurks shy and wild
Among the thickets; and the jack-snipe here
Inserts his bill, and sucks sweet nutriment
From the rank fen, or near the oozy spring:
The wether-bleat is he we hear at eve,
Calling his loves, when dusky twilight glooms
Toward summer night. The pewit, with long crest,
And gay as youthful soldier on parade,
Insidious to surprise the curious worm
His cunning hath alarmed by frequent stamp
Beside its burrow's pores, alights in flock
Upon the upland pasture; or in air
Frolics on ample wing: and thence, from shade
Of those thick trees, issues the evening owl,
Seeking in lower grounds his vermin food,
A flitting shadow of the coming night.
And there I view, though with a chastened joy,
Memorials scant and rude of former men,
And heaped with artless, but with giant hand.
Within my bound some remnant still is left
Of ancient church—some gray and broken walls,
To which God's successor hath joined his own;
And where Christ's members once gathered in choir,
The drudge-horse now is stabled. There the ground
Is stored with relics of the saints that sleep;
And the wronged skull hath served for door-way step,
Unknown and unsuspected in its use,
To generations: there the huge thorn trunk,
Thick set with rings and staples—links with times
Long past—showed how men's wants were poorly
served,
When life derived from art her rudest aid,

Housing the steed beneath the spreading tree.
 Haply this site had been a hill-fort first,
 Cast up by the ancient rovers of the deep,
 When Norway sent her sea-kings o'er the main,
 To climes benign ; and to win fertile lands,
 Or hold a brief possession while endured
 The worth of ravage : but where, towards the east,
 Its verge declines down to the winter lake,
 Stood once, as I have seen by form of part,
 A round tower, tall, while yet the light remained
 In eyes of man's race latest passed away ;
 The haunt of doves that fly with poised wing,
 Like small boats on the wave in merry gale,
 Or boys that swim upon a summer sea
 Conscious of power, and sink or rise at will ;—
 Till wealth, that saw no use, but where self gained,
 Begged the high tower to build his windowed walls.
 Of earlier date seems therefore the long mount,
 Than pirate Dane ; and the old tower of times
 When Celtic chieftain reared such monument,
 Or Druid rites required such emblem proud
 Amidst the gloomy groves. Nor distant far
 The giant's grave,—haply a cromlech ruined,—
 On the hill's-side just opposite, and raised
 With mighty stones to front the orient morn.
 For here, belike, the sacred circles sat
 Of law, and solemn justice ; mustered here
 Their armed assembly ; and the altars stood
 Of their stern gods, and tombs of former men.
 But lone beneath, rose the tall pillared tower
 Beside the lake, sequestered 'midst dark shade,
 And woods of oak not yet eradicate.
 Alas ! in every age, weak man hath found

The world, and her loud stir, and strife for wealth,
 And power, and pleasure, still at war with God,
 Shutting His image out at all her doors,
 Whether it come to them rude or refined,
 If with clear eyes of holiness it come.
 But some have used such fond helps as they might,
 To win the great idea to their minds ;—
 The silent cell, the quiet hermitage,
 The lightsome hill-top, and the awful grove,
 And sterner rites of sacrifice abused,
 Where human victims bled for ritual lambs.
 And yet, God is not far from every one,
 Our life in him ;—and all the nations wide,
 Dividing the same blood through many veins,
 Derive still down some weak, obliterate trace
 Of that primeval image whence they spring ;
 And which can be restored, when, with all helps,
 In beauty of holiness they worship God.
 And, that men may, some traverse moor and hill,
 Calling rude minds, and uncouth manners forth
 To noblest contemplations, and the house
 Of daily prayer, and solemn mysteries :
 And, amidst reeking smoke from the dull sod,
 That taints the vestment many days, beneath
 Low rafters glossed with soot, are heard pure words
 Of amiable mind—maxims of faith—
 Motives of action, as the heavens sublime ;
 While, by the hearth the humble pastor sits,
 Anxious for souls, and his just duty done.
 The wandering beggar, who, from door to door,
 Pleads with importunate whine for alms in kind,
 Not careful is, as he, no abode to miss,
 Nor lowly ; for coarse pride may go in rags.—

And thrones, and crosiers, and the crowns of kings
Be clothed with unfeigned humility.

Various the characters of mind he moves ;
Though oft, a mask is worn to suit the hour,
With features fixed, and voice exaggerate.
But still, within the honest churchman's home,
Mild manners reign at least to him ; and eyes
Of kind, respectful welcome woo him in,
And courteous words ; and the best chair is set.
The little children hear his earnest voice,
With looks of veneration ; and are proud
To answer questions they have lately learned :
The mother smiles well-pleased ; or, if they fail,
Softly suggests the needful word herself,
Not much unwilling that her youthful lore
Should thus, in timely aids, appear again.
The father promises still added care,
That, in due time, they may confirm their vows
With perfect understanding. Much himself
Monished to observe at Church God's holy day,—
Christ to receive in sacramental signs,—
And know, and use the Church's book of prayer,
Familiar, and to trace its harmonies
With Holy Writ,—the pastor journeys on.

But if he enter next where men are trained
To stand in separation,—whether Rome
Insinuate jealousies, and foul deceits,
Basely perverting from their natural prince
And native Church, the hearts of simple men,—
Or inborn pride hath willing learned to approve
Grim Calvin's platform, where the sacred heads
Of primal order in Christ's Holy Church
Were smitten down with sacrilegious hand,

And ministries and rites all vitiate,—
Or fanatic ignorance hath gained the use
Of godly words, and sanctimonious garb
From subtle Wesley, who brake priesthood's vows,
Sowing in perfidy Christ's moral truth,
(With fruits indeed that savour of the soil,
The worst, as best things when perverted are—)
Whatever gorgon form of hideous schism
Scares rude the Church's peace, and wounds her breast,
There hath her pastor little joy to sit,
His words gainsaid, misstated when he is gone,
And worldly things, or fair religion's cost,
Their theme, and fond complaint. For some will love
Religion much in tongue, and mimic looks,
And turn up in the streets the white of the eye,
Where loud her words are used, and phrase is heard ;
Will stand in throng, with shoulders forward bowed,
And party zeal ; and pay a crafty price,
That none, at length, they may be forced to pay
To Her whose maintenance is at no man's charge ;
Aiding those Samsons blind, whose desperate arms
Shake the great pillars of the sacred house,
Mine at the base, and break the capitals.
These, like the mighty wrestler, rend the oak,
That yet with sudden force and quick recoil,
May hold their helpless bodies forth a prey
To the fell natures of the wilderness :
And they who pay such service, perverse, choose
The worser lesson from the broken shafts,
That, separate, the bundled quiver's weak.
These could be well content to see the toil,
And reap the benefit of pastoral cares,
Yet send the priesthood naked round the world ;

And prove their want of pious culture more,
 As they'd forego its use to escape its cost.
 But not more various was the Achaian mind
 Before Troy walls, when hastening home, they rushed
 To drag their gallies from the glad sea-beach ;
 And the wise Ithacan constrained their stay
 By motives various, variously enforced —
 Than those the pastor guides in Christ's behalf.

Scarce other than that wild joy of the Greeks,
 Their eager haste, who now, the slow hours gone,
 Issuing from school, as bees from the full hive
 To choose new realms, seek with quick feet the pond
 Sheeted with ice, and on its marble floor
 Slide bold, a merry crew, o'er the smooth glass,
 With belted satchels slung, succeeding fast
 In furious mirth; till one unlucky wight
 Falls, and a group dies clustered on the pool.
 The glowing warmth of their young blood, evoked
 By exercise, repels the powers of frosts;
 Though, lingering near, the smaller imps in rows
 Stand with pinched visage pale, and hands secrete,
 And watch the joys they are afraid to share.
 These much I visit, where a master's eye,
 And forms, and rules control their childish will ;
 Inspect their order, urge their gradual course,
 Oft scarce perceptible in weeks and months,—
 For, into small-mouthed phials you must pour
 Little at once, or else your wealth is waste ;
 And try their skill, and practised memory
 Through the mysterious family of signs
 By which our English speech, with suffrage strange,
 Obtains expression on the lettered page,
 And fixes sound :—strange unions, where the dead

Mostly encumber those that live and breathe.

Or else the secrets scientific mind
 Developes in the use of numbers clear,
 So dark untraced, so easy when they are found,
 Employ their emulous care ; and curious arts
 Of their notation, which the Arab brought
 From eastern clime,—and, where the Spanish land
 Slopes to the midland sea, and cloudless skies
 Mature the orange, and the lime's pale gold,
 Taught Europe's sons, for lodgment on their soil,
 That, as in palaces of kings and laws,
 Place still should indicate degree of power ;
 And what names else Locke's thoughtful mind devised,
 To measure distance in the starry heavens,
 Where the ascetic Samian fixed the throne
 Of number, as the principle of things,
 And heard the belted spheres, and planets' chime
 Circle the sun by its smooth harmonies.

Or, higher theme,—the will of Him who made
 The earth and heavens, engrafted on the mind
 Of infancy, bears fruit upon the lips ;
 And, from the mouth of babes and sucklings won,
 His praise is perfected, where sages erred.
 The wisdom of the Church informs their thoughts
 In summaries brief, with all that faith and love
 His Word Divine taught, while on earth He made
 His tabernacle pure in human flesh ;
 Nor ignorance can any more obscure
 From docile spirit, what is due to man,
 To self, to God, and to his holy Church.

But winter not alone my wanderings know,
 Due where the hand of death shall open next
 The long-closed windows of the sick man's cell :

And, if the early spring's cold, changeful smile
 Invite with glance serene, well pleased I mark
 The spreading verdure near the leafless bowers,
 And spy the swelling buds that promise shade,—
 A pleasure from the landscape not its own,
 For Nature's eyes as yet are dimmed with tears.
 Thus hope prevents fruition with a joy
 That stands a-tiptoe on her gladsome heights,
 With sparkling looks, and heart exhilarate,—
 Like young day on the mountains, with pure feet
 All wet with morning dews,—amidst the songs
 Of early birds, and cattle on the hills,
 Disporting him in beams of orient light.
 And glad it is to listen to the streams,
 And hear the gush of waters murmuring,
 And see their wild haste, as they seek with glee
 And liberty once more their ocean home;
 Thus thoughtless boyhood, with the voice of mirth,
 Runs on to meet the bitter tides of care.
 Dear to the eye is this fair light of the sun,
 And beautiful the wide flood of the sea
 Under the soft breath of the gentle wind,
 And all the earth when it first blooms in spring,
 And the rich waters :* but, what were they all,
 If tender hope, that hideth in man's heart,
 (A sibyl in her cave)—by secret spell
 Did not lift up a blissful heaven o'er all,
 And shut the world within its glorious span.
 Thus doth the orb'd eye form for itself
 The azure vault embracing all the earth ;
 Whose round doth bend a little above the hills,

And yet the lights of heaven are in its sphere,—
 The centre still with us,—the studded arch
 Defined, yet evanescent to our search
 Between the rainbow and the furthest star.

But soon the spring approacheth summer's strength,
 And anxious husbandmen, with eager care,
 Chide the swift passage of the stinted hours,
 That will not stay although the days be foul.
 Another May is fled—a lovely May ;
 Bright were the skies, and glorious were the fields
 With summer flowers : the arm of labour found
 No week-day rest ; and the drudge horse, toil-worn,
 Now droops his neck, and in the furrow stops,
 As if he viewed the long ridge with despair.
 His bony frame is seen, tired are his knees,
 And, greedy at the stall he swallows fast
 His measured food, aware of time's elapse,
 And the relentless harness on his back :
 But, ere the season close our uses out,
 No slackness may be known ; while the skies smile,
 And earth is dry, and the seeds ask the soil,
 Pointing their shoots in shame of our delay.

When summer leads my walk through shady lanes,
 Few things I love to look upon so well
 As the clear spring, low down in cave of rock :
 Pure element ! I have found thee at thy source.
 "Water is best," the Theban poet sang :
 And, ask the sage in nature's secret work,
 And he will tell thee, water is the chief
 Of all her nutriments, by which she feeds
 Life in all things that live : Man's daily food
 It minglest ; lower creatures quench their thirst
 Or drink for pleasure from nought else besides ;

The tribes of seas and streams breathe it, or fresh,
 Or salt, with eager gaspings ; and, without a pause,
 All the green herbs upon the breast of earth,
 By mouths innumEROus as the sea-side sands,
 Suck in its sweetnesS, else they pine and die.
 It runs among the hills, leaps from the rock
 With silvery foot, and falling, soothes the ear ;
 Or, in a headlong river rushing down,
 BurthenS the soul with sense of mighty power.
 It glides along the vale, and leads its train
 Obsequious, round the feet of every slope,
 Where tall woods wave, and cattle ruminate,
 And the white cottage peaceful looketh down
 Upon its gentle windings. Close-built towns
 It visits ; but I leave it there, to yield
 Its dueous tribute to old ocean's waste ;
 Strong tyrant, that makes all its wealth his own,
 Regardless that it comes, and sways alone
 Waters too wide for eye or mind to scan.
 Thence it returns in freshness, voyaging
 The viewless air beneath the golden stars ;
 For it loves not those dark and briny depths,
 T' which nothing from above hath e'er gone down ;—
 Returns upon the wings of all the winds,
 And cloudy rests on the high mountain tops ;
 As bird, scared forth abroad by near alarms,
 After its troubled flight will perch awhile
 On topmost bough, to recognise its home.

But these thick clouds, that rest on mountain tops,
 Dissolved in rains, creep subtle through the pores
 Of hollow earth, gliding where lime-rocks, stored
 For precious uses both of house and field,
 Here in the hill-sides, show, when cut sheer down,

More shapely than the stones of giant walls
 In Argos,—and more like the ruined sides
 Of old cathedral pile, or temple vast,
 Built high of marbles from the mountain mine's
 White breast,—but wasted now, and at their joints
 By the air's busy action sore decayed.
 The waters filtered through such labyrinth dark,
 At length find issue in the vales and glens,
 Where village maidens bear their pitchers forth
 To crystal spring, when in soft summer's eve
 The setting sun shoots his rich light athwart
 The landscape ; and they gather near its steps
 Of natural stone, and draw its ready wealth :
 Then, under the thick trees, tell many a tale
 Of love, or mirth, while sultry traveller tastes
 The standing can, that idly waits their pause.

The melancholy stillness now at eve
 How sweet ! few sounds are heard,
 Save the soft music of the throstle's note,
 Which safe concealed within the gloomy shade
 Of yonder wood, pours forth such various strains
 As thrill, and soothe, and harmonize the soul :
 The human heart could scarce be vicious here,
 Or dare pollute this holy solitude.
 What poet but hath sung the pleasant life
 That escapes the notice of the world, retired !
 There nature spreads her lap stored with delights :
 Choose part, choose all,—who cometh next in choice,
 Nor finds deficiency, nor stinted goes.
 Mine 'tis to enjoy the fragrant evenings cool,
 When summer strews his sweets luxuriantly ;
 For this is meditation's chosen time :
 The patriarch sought the field at even-tide,

When gentle gloom had veiled the glare of day,
 And tintured fancy's pencil with a shade.
 Then, contemplation, with the placid eye,
 Stands wrapt in thought beside some gurgling brook,
 With soul attuned to the water's sound,
 And softened into pleasing sadness. Now I'll forth,
 But who shall share my walk, and help my praise
 Of God's great work, with sympathy of mind ?
 None who cannot be serious ; none whose tongue
 Would vex my wearied ear with common-place ;
 None who can ne'er be happy but in crowds.
 Slow will we wander down that lonely way,
 There, where the solemn firs weep o'er the stream,
 Beside yon quiet bridge of small resort ;
 Whose arch, streaked o'er with gentle lines of moss,
 Gives silent notice of a distant date.
 We'll tread that path, which seams the grassy sward,
 With track imbrowned ; whose faded herbage thin
 Is seldom bruised by wearied traveller's foot.
 Plenty and beauty here dance hand in hand,
 With the same rosy garland both entwined ;
 They smile on man, and woo him to admire,
 To love, and to enjoy, with thankful heart,
 The glad creation of Almighty Power.
 Soft breathes the western wind, just strong enough
 To make its rustling heard among the leaves,
 That, like a cloud, invest the branching stems
 Which line the pathway that I silent tread :
 Borne on its gentle wings comes the loud low
 Of cattle in the vale ; the bark of dogs is heard,
 But so remote, its harshness vexes not
 The listening ear : and lingering twilight dim,
 Last of the train that wait the sun's career

And daily march behind the monarch's state,
 Now on the threshold of the western world,
 Gives her last look to me—a look of peace—
 And follows, with majestic, downward step,
 Her father and her king. Hail, evening glooms !
 Hail, westward-pacing shades which herald night !
 Hail, darkness too, and night, joyless and drear !
 And yet, not drear or joyless is the night
 To me, with all her silvery-lusted gems,
 Nor lessonless. Each glittering stud, that decks
 Her chariot wheels, each pearl that decks her crown,
 Each diamond sparkling on her sable robes,
 Shines forth a rolling world ; or, in their flight,
 Centres a charge of worlds in mutual poise.
 With what grand harmony these sons of light
 Perform their nightly task ! Though circle seem
 With circle intertwined, and, to our partial view
 They roll perplexed ; yet, from the midmost throne,
 Seen by the eye of God, that order sure
 They keep, and walk those shining circles round,
 Which first He gave them, at creation's birth.
 Nor, otherwise, the view of earthly rule
 To men beneath its sphere. Its orbit—seen
 By casual glimpse, and so, less understood—
 As one proportioned whole is wisely hid,
 Lest malice should prevent, or meaner minds
 Disturb its motions just, and prudent way.

In bonds of fast agreement God hath bound
 His heavenly wonders, and the face of things
 Beyond the paths of earth is radiant peace ;
 But here, the world of minds strives with her law,
 And pride exasperates, and envy pains.
 And yet the things of earth are for a day,

Nor very precious ; and their glory shines
 More for delight of others than our own :
 But come where flatterer's voice is never heard,
 Nor wondering gaze beholds thy passing pomp,—
 Nor, look for pleasure where a gay outside
 Pleases, or grieves the eyes of other men :
 Sure now, when forced to seek within thyself
 The comforts of thy life, an humble heart
 Were worth them all ; and thou wouldest leave thy
 state

For a well-ordered mind, and studies wise,
 To qualify a still retired life ;
 As British seamen, when cut off from home
 By half the circuit of a world, 'tis writ,
 Cast on the decks they trod their silver coins
 Neglected, as once used, then useless toys :
 And as poor Selkirk on the lonely isle,
 Exiled from hope of sight of friend, or man,
 And sunk in horrors drear of solitude,
 Would fain have given his island full of gold,
 Had it been his, for some few tools or arms,
 So wouldest thou freely give thy shining stores
 For homely interest in common things.
 Thus through fair Selborne's fields, and ancient lanes,
 And o'er its woody Hanger, White employed
 His intellectual leisure, in a joy
 Wherewith a stranger intermeddleth not,
 Wise in the ways of nature : Walton thus,
 On fresh May mornings, clomb the steepy heights,
 And down the shelfy sides of wandering Dove,
 His own beloved river, clear and swift ;
 And looked to rest after his angling toils,
 At honest alehouse, in a cleanly room.

With choice rhymes on the walls, after old tales
 Were told, and ballads sung, and the good ale
 Had cheered ; passing a little time in sports,
 And mirth without offence to God or man.

Delicious the soft air of summer night !
 And often have I left a heated couch
 To catch its coolness. Opened to the east,
 My window show'd the twilight on the hills ;
 But, towards the south, the hollow vale between
 Was sunk in glooms ; and the tall trees still cast
 Long shadows dark upon the moonlit ground,
 Where, through the leafy sprays, the pale light fell,
 Like gentle radiance beaming through the lids
 And long eye-lashes of a downcast eye.
 The white walls of the church, in stronger sheen,
 Stood forth before the waning planet's gaze,
 And sounds were heard I still love to recal
 Of insect life ; and, farther off, the rail,
 Beneath the cool dews on the grassy mead,
 With ceaseless harpings to the quiet night
 Loud telling echo, that her lowly lodge
 And nestlings all were safe, and happy she.
 Ah ! meek humility, and calm content,
 And quiet life in ways ordained of God !
 There is on earth no other happiness.

But though these plains are fair, and gently slope
 From every side, to form a hollow nest,
 Where many a cottage gleams, and hedge-row screen,
 And yellow corn-land, and the meadow's breadth
 That groweth in luxuriant idleness,
 Thick interlaid, make all its pleasant round
 A home of beauty,—summer will not stay.
 The leaf, transparent to the evening sun

In juicy tenderness, more callous grown,
 Gathers a darker green, and soon is veined
 With harder outline, like the changing cheek,
 When youth is o'er, and paled its purple light.

The sun upon a bright September morn
 Hath shaken off the swathings of the clouds,
 Looking abroad upon the glittering drops,
 Which night's sad secresy hath largely shed
 On herb and tree. The bosom of the thorn
 Is richly stored with crimson clusters, food
 Of guest-fowl from the cold Norwegian climes;
 The prickly wild-rose wears its scarlet beads
 Like pendant coral; under hedge-row's shade
 The geometric spider's polygons
 Star the green furze with rays, and subtile woof
 Of parallels and angles, all exact
 As science measures, or the strained lines
 Of Arab tent,—o'er treacherous recess
 Extended; and the viewless silver threads
 Of floating gossamer tickle the cheek
 Of joyous youth new-risen; for such with me,
 (My sons), oft pass the way, where its bare length,
 Right toward the orient morn, coincident,
 Catches his level beam; or else, between
 The lofty stems of ancient trees, pale ash or elm,
 Whose lower foliage here and there transmits
 The horizontal ray; and, high o'erarched,
 Beareth the willing thought, from orisons
 Of nature, to the huge cathedral pile,
 And forms, and lights, and harmonies sublime,—
 As much resembling, true to nature too.
 The while, my younger boys gather the fruits,
 The latest found in golden autumn's lap,

Crude to their taste ; or curious watch for them,
 Who weave the mystic gossamer unseen,
 To fly like witches through the foggy air ;
 Or, while they rouse—they and their silk-eared dog—
 The lurking game-fowl from the stubble land,
 A merry rout,—the eldest brother keeps
 His pace with me ; and now, as oft before,
 Our talk is of Christ's Holy Church, its ends,
 Its frame Divine, and all its history.

Hurries October's latest decade soon
 On wings of storm ; fast rush the sear leaves down
 To the strange earth, that soils their misery.
 For they, like living things, in ceaseless flight
 Leave their huge nests on high in ash or elm :
 They strew the wilderness, they strew the streams,
 They dance in restless whirl along the ways,
 Or sail a moment on the mill-pond's breast,
 And gather round its shores. So the strong winds
 Of stern necessity drive forth man's race
 From home, and native land, to climes unknown ;
 And their dispersion fills the world, on coasts
 And swampy wastes, where towns are gathered full,
 And traffic lures them to disease and death.
 But the sweet bard of rocky Chios' isle,
 Great nature's wise interpreter, hath found
 In you, ye scattered outcasts, portraiture
 Of kindred meaning, and of likeness clear :—
 Even as the race of leaves, such too the race
 Of men : these leaves the wind pours on the ground ;
 But more the wood unfolds from budding gems ;
 And spring-time sweet comes on : and so of men—
 One generation blooms, another falls.
 And thus fair nature hath revealed to me

Such forms of beauty, o'er these hills and plains,
As she hath deemed me worthy of, or thought
Like mine might reach and relish ; and my pen
Hath slowly traced her pleasant images :
But still, while I delay, they spread, and lose,
Like a few wine-drops shed in water, strength,
Feature precise, and living colours new,
Dilute in feebler mind and memory :
So have I seen emerge behind the hill
The huge breadth of the sun on misty morn,
Defined and red ; but higher risen, his rays
Diffuse and scattered, and his visage less,
And mingled with light clouds of fleecy gold.
Yet though the world should with these verses own
No sympathy, it cannot if it would,
Take all their dream, and pleasant use away,—
As sang the Sabine bard of time enjoyed,
And Jove who could not make the past undone.
These measured numbers, sung in solitude
And secrecy—no less than prayers and alms
Done to be seen of men by trumpet's sound—
Soothing the flight of time have their reward.

BOOK II.

THE COMPOSITION OF VERSES.—ASPIRATIONS.—THE WAYWARDNESS OF FANCY.—GOOD-NATURE IN BOOKS MORE ATTRACTIVE THAN WIT.—SCOTT.—SHAKSPERE.—CERVANTES.—OLD DIVINES.—HOOKER.—TAYLOR.—BARROW.—THE BIBLE.—HOME.

The Study.

Be my verse rhymeless still!—for such verse oft
I've used from boyhood, in attempts to tell
The pleasure, and the better thoughts that live
Within my soul's lone cells; and by this verse
Familiar, can I make best effort now:
Ah! might I,—like the lark that quits the earth
With ready risings on the gales of heaven,
Though still his bright eye looketh on his nest;
And when he must descend, his music still
Rings in the ear, as it was heard on high.

Times when the sense beholds your very place
Ye works of nature, I ne'er found most fit
To weave the web, or spin the slender thread
Of my poetic fancies: they are drawn out
More freely from the memory's treasure-house
Of painted forms, than the actual show of things.
For, Nature, thou art a mighty mother fair,—
And, when thou smilest, or when thy face is dark
With cloudy frown, thy visage doth possess

The soul so fully, that reflection hath
 No place,—not room enough at least to exert
 Power independent, and must gaze on thee.
 And thus, with thee all occupied, my mind
 Doth, on the instant, take thy countenance' form,
 Or dark or bright, by passive impress caught.
 So have I seen upon the nurse's lap
 An infant watch her studied change of look,
 And, still reflecting on its innocent face
 Her aspect, bland, or shadowing playful grief.

Fain would I, on the tables of my heart,
 Copy fair Nature's semblance,—and educe
 In quiet thence just images of truth,—
 Though still yet stirring,—busy though alone.
 So have I marked the little shining sands
 Moved at the bottom of a limpid well,
 As the spring lived below in glassy shrine ;
 There, screened in hollow nook, the poplar shade
 Shook sunlight on it through the leafy roof.
 But, cautious to disturb the sacred place,
 Or change the shining fountain's visage calm,
 The waters o'er, stole through the bleachfield white,
 While lower, cattle cooled their thirst and drank,
 Though bare-foot boys drew at the fount itself ;
 Thus springeth mind, and watereth wide man's life.

I sat amidst old books in narrow room,
 And seemed to hear a sound from a vexed sea,
 The life of man, and seethings of its waves ;
 Like curious schoolboy with his Indian shell
 Close held upon his ear,—listening, he says,
 The coming tide on the shores far away ;
 Nearer approach, nor nearer intercourse
 Desiring, might it be, with that stern flood,

Unless that I might mix my strain with theirs,
 Whose mighty voices, o'er the charmed sea
 Sleeping in strength, a giant in repose,
 Sweep in full concert, yet with various tone,
 Soothing those waves to peace,—like angels sent
 To sway the insensate elements : and join
 That sacred throng, even in its utmost courts,
 Which, like God's Church, is one in earth and heaven,
 Their temples bound with radiant diadem,
 Where, midmost seen, with high and reverend head
 Musaeus in Elysium walks,—as here
 Wordsworth on earth yet leads the hallowed choir ;
 Priests of pure life, and pious bards who spake
 What Phœbus might not all disdain to hear.
 But if such aspirations breathe in vain,
 And if cold damps upon my spirit hang,
 Like those low clouds that load the pallid skies,
 Ah, sometimes might a splendour gild their breast,
 Half-opened underneath the shrouded sun,
 And show some track of glory to the world !
 The silk-worm, dull of colour, housed and fed
 Upon the mulberry leaf in mean attire,
 Winds from its bowels out those subtle threads
 That tremble almost from the touch of sight ;
 Which, when re-wound, so strong, so warm, imbibe
 Colours more lustrous than the summer flowers :
 Alas ! might verse of mine so shine, so please !
 But joyless cold, now in late summer days
 As in the plashy weeks of early spring,
 And pouring skies, that lean their cloudy breast
 Upon the neighbouring hills, while sad the eye
 Beholds their languor pale, and slow collapse,
 And sickly dissolution,—or slant lines

Of streaming rain, such as a gentle boy
 With cunning hand pencils for deepest shade,
 And the soft miry ways, that clog the step,
 And stain the toiling traveller's attire,—
 These, with the body, prison the dull mind,
 That sullen sits at home, and helpless eats
 The heart of gloomy care, a bitter food.

My fingers idle on the feathered pen,—
 For, that of steel I have forborne, nor plough
 My paper, a thin field with iron share,
 Soon choked, and useless then,—but still employ,
 Of choice, the gentle Nature's readier aids,
 That fall, like written words, silent and dark,
 On upland pasture, or old rookery ground
 Dropped from the pruned wing of sooty crow,—
 Or else the household goose yields her long quills,
 More lasting channels of their inky freight,—
 I wait the hazy dawn of lingering thought,
 Or catch its sudden glance among the clouds.
 Then, sitting where it ought not on my page,
 Appears, at times, the same unwelcome word,
 And the mind seeks to run in the same forms,
 And thought, with slippery lapse, to trace again
 The same familiar issues,—as I note
 Oft, for a time, with the same hour's return,
 Days wear the same successive character.
 But, musing so,—with full and high resolve
 Of thoughts sublime, and lovely images
 Won from retiring Nature,—not without
 The glow of pictured words, and melodies
 Falling in silent sweetness on the ear
 Of fancy,—have I waited still in vain?
 Yet where should they be found, but in the scenes

Of modest Nature, and man's various life,
And in the soul of man engaged with these?

But, seldom do I paint, when best I may,
What most hath pleased me, when I sit me down.
The evening soft, serene, and golden bright,
Though fitfully, and as in favoured spots,
Gladdened my sense and spirit haply more,
As long bedimmed with rains and heavy cloud;
So have the common fields delights unknown
Before, for him who rises from sick bed:
And I had seen with joy the yellow light
Upon the leaves of hedge-rows, whose full sides
Ne'er feel the stringent shears; and as the boughs
Stooped graceful to the breeze that swept the skies
And brought serenity, I silent thought
How much of all the natural works of God
He hath endowed with beauty, as with use.
And then my eye roved far to distant lands
That rise to meet the heaven with moderate slope,
Seamed all with bounds, and tesselated o'er
With various vegetation and dark groves.
The sunlight flitted like a passing smile,
Or like a bird that visits her fond nest
With food and gladness,—or the shining trout,
That, for a moment, flashes in the beam,
And hides his splendour underneath a bank.
The yellow hammer, too, not far away,
Poured his shrill lay monotonous. These things
Had soothed my spirit's pine,—and I had sat
To tell of these,—yet found far other thoughts.
I do not love the keen play of shrewd wit
In men or books—(haply because not mine)—
As I do love the mellow humour, mirth,

And kindly springs of sense. The sarcasm fine,
 The Muse's sneer, or laugh malevolent
 Delight me not as gentler spirits do,
 Whose blame is just, and smile not all contempt.
 The mighty bard who sleeps in Dryburgh's walls
 Thus charmed the world. While his keen glance
 through life's

Strange arts and scenes, sought crime and folly out,—
 O'er all the ways of men more largely viewed,
 His look was reverent and brotherly ;
 And, as is nature's truth, he still discerned
 Something of good or wise in every thing.
 Where mountains frown in savage sameness bare,
 Or where the robber's den hung dark and foul,
 In cavern or grim tower, men still were moved
 By motives of weak men, and were not fiends :
 And the gay smile, that lurked beneath his brows,
 And curved his lip scarce sensibly withdrawn,
 Fell on fantastic follies, like the light
 That visits distant fields, and shows by chance
 A glittering potsherd there, or radiant glass,
 Remnant of fragile art, and man's device.
 Nor other his great master, Avon's bard ;
 Whose eye, 't might seem, beheld the elements
 Of man's most secret nature, and could frame
 With an unerring will his shadowy tribes.
 Wondrous that they, the holiest of man's race,
 Whose minds were purified by tragic song,
 Terror and pity,—searching their own hearts,
 Could see the evil thoughts in those pure depths,
 Though as a mirror,—and the motives vile,
 Which prompt the weakest, or the worst of men.
 And thou, Cervantes, with thy knight and squire,

Though imitated, still inimitable ;
 If yet appears no counterpart of thee
 And of thy graphic words,—or, such as fails
 Far otherwise than he who once at Rome,
 Fastidious, strained Athenian comedy,
 So that the wine much of its flavour lost,
 Copying Menander with too delicate hand
 In phrase diluting comic pleasantry,—
 What but thy generous humour is the cause,
 Which quiet glides in full and easy stream
 That keeps the savour of its parent spring ?
 We must respect thy knight, with grander view
 Of theoretic chivalry, though crazed,
 Than e'er was rule to the reality
 Of such an order : but thou leavest us free
 To infinite laughter at thy knavish squire,
 His shallow schemes, and ready mother-wit.
 Yet, in thy book of mirth we find no line
 To taint morality ; no flout at laws
 Divine or human ; effort none to obscure
 Virtue's just limits, or to undermine
 Her sacred fences, that their slippery sides
 May sink, and leave her gardens all exposed
 To brutal natures' tread, and surfeiting.

But other tomes there are upon these shelves,
 That to the conscience press man's duty close ;—
 Our best of ethics are our old divines.
 Man's rights and obligations there are taught
 On principles, at once, sure, well-defined,
 And noble ; winning love, and yet revealed
 In truth's severe and venerable form :
 Faith hath her facts, reason her evidence.
 The pleasure there, compared with heathen lore

In things of God, is like to his, who long
 Hath wandered variously, where the Alps soar
 Sublime, and waters fall precipitate,
 Or rivers lone expand to dangerous seas
 Of unknown bound, and the wild forests spread
 Interminable ; but, at length, returned,
 Finds—all his home around, and nearer far
 To his affection—beauteous scenes, his haunts,
 Which he had slighted, and scarce knew were there ;
 Fair, fertile lands, made such by human skill,
 With meadows green, and yellow harvests clad
 Rich to the eye, and heavy to the hand ;
 Rivers between, soft set in grassy banks,
 Wherein the long sprays of the glossy beach
 Dip their low leaves from out of garden grounds ;
 Hamlets, and towns, and spires, that indicate
 Life civilised, and pure through Christian faith,—
 And man himself intelligent and free.

These homely scenes delight the travelled mind
 The more by contrast,—more than grandeur wild
 Of Alp, or wood, or waste, or lonely flood,—
 (Though widely there the eye may expatiate),—
 As more they yield of usefulness, and joy
 Domestic, and bear sign of social man :
 And so from ethnic wisdom's solemn dreams,
 Or evanescent vision of high truth,
 We turn to Holy Writ, and sanctions sure,
 And laws, that meet our life at every turn.

In these old books of earlier English lore
 We read the pure words of the mother tongue,
 Ere Latin phrase usurped their native place,
 And meanings ready to the English mind :
 The earnest Hooker's learned argument,

Curtailed of just proportion by the fraud
 Of Puritan, or envious waste of time,—
 Whose studious spirit had not quiet, still,
 Although his wish was always where he might
 Behold God's blessings grow out of the earth,
 And eat his bread in peace and privacy :
 And Taylor, too, whose splendid eloquence
 Is like a polished sword in gorgeous sheath,
 Or held 'midst diamonds in a monarch's hand.
 For, glorious thought in choice of words he wove,
 Exact and plain, yet wealthy ; in the flow
 Of generous sense rich ; and his memory
 Redundant of the wells of heathen lore,
 And churchman's treasures of the early time ;
 With grave, satiric wit threading the heart's
 Dark labyrinths, and depths, and secret cells,
 And flashing there stern lights of truth Divine,
 Hateful to fierce hypocrisy's vexed eyes ;
 Arrayed the while in panoply he took
 From armoury of the Church, and lawful power.
 Barrow, severe in use of English tongue,
 Whose simple energy stands forth in firm
 And manly thought, and healthy vigour pure,
 More than by aids of fancy. His clear mind
 From mathematic discipline, employed
 On moral contemplations, deeply searched
 The strong foundations of his sacred themes ;
 And, laden with the Spirit's wisdom, breathed
 Through all the precincts of the English Church
 Instruction, wholesome, bracing as the air
 That companies the salt flow of the tide.
 And when I read the wisdom they have writ,
 Who were the primal bishops of the Church

Retrieved from anarchy,—released from Rome,—
 'Tis wondrous to remark, how, while they teach
 The Christian doctrine, that no law of life,
 Or rule of discipline is left untold ;
 And from their sacred college emanates
 A sure criterion : so, no cunning guise
 Of error may come forth to unsettle minds.

But we can find they knew its wrinkled face,
 Although we meet it now with modern air.
 But all that wisdom had been earlier writ,
 Be sure, in other forms, on Sacred Page ;
 Whence flows, as from a crystal fount beneath
 A rock in cool recess, throughout the Church,
 The living waters pure in generous stream ;
 Which they who drink, thirst never ; nor a draught
 Sweeter or deeper need, or ever seek.
 The second Adam there appears on earth
 Enshrining Deity to be our friend :
 And, as the dignity of truth required,—
 That Awful Presence silently implied
 In act, or word expressive ;—rather shown
 In casual glimpses to a willing eye,
 Like the reminding glance that secret fell
 On Peter,—than with broad, continuous plea
 Asserted : and, the exemplar of man's life
 In every hardest outline firm pourtrayed,
 The Sacrifice beyond the price of worlds.
 But here in solemn awe let me adore !
 And, in my heart's profoundest secrecy,
 Apply its sacred issues to cleanse out
 The stain of sins, catching its holy streams
 Through chalice red with wine, and lifted up
 In hallowed hands,—and by a life

Of innocence ; nor much expatiate
 Upon a theme so reverend, ineffable,
 As I would stir in others, or myself
 A momentary passion, soon to die,
 Like crackling thorns upon a blazing hearth.
 Laying aside the study of the world,
 And of the craving flesh, creeping and proud,
 Be much my studies in thy holy page,
 Thou Sacred History of the world, as God's,—
 Record of righteous laws,—exemplary
 Of saints for good and ill,—their faith, their falls,—
 Books of old piety, and holy psalms,
 That breathe, in amaranthine odours blest,
 Prayer's sweetest incense over all the earth,
 And glorious praises ; and which often touch,
 As with a diamond's ray, and sudden glance,
 The secret mystery of man's inmost soul,
 And verities of all he finds on earth.
 And Prophecy in thee, on cloudy chair
 Seated sublime, surveys the rolling world,
 And marks the utmost end of its career ;
 Bodes its dark history to all the Church,
 And testifies the providence of God.
 So looks the wading moon, with veiled head
 By fits, and gloomy light, upon these plains,
 And shadows the outline of the distant hills,
 Revealing to the traveller pools and fens.
 Searching these stores, and some who drew from
 these,
 Or, o'er the ancient books of Greece and Rome,
 Which by example teach the highest arts
 Of eloquence and song,—and manners then,—
 And motives of mankind as still they live,

I pass some hours of early summer morn,
 Or winter's lingering eve, within these walls ;
 And my sons learn to turn old volumes o'er,
 Oft by their pictures won to taste their sense.
 Here no regard to eye censorious,—here
 No cautious care to suit our manners nice
 To the inspection of a patron friend,
 And fail mathless, withers and blights
 Enjoyment. Sure our own fireside is free,—
 Our garden, where we walk, and muse, and sport,
 Nay, work and wear, just as we please. This old
 And thread-bare coat—what know I—even a rent
 May chance reveal the snow-white linen fine,
 And amply spread beneath,—not much unlike
 Neglect and poverty, that prompt the soul
 Ingenuous, and proud, to show its worth,—
 This ancient coat is comfort, for it wears,
 Without one careful thought, or fear of harm,
 Or needful cost,—so well may be for mine.
 How should I else, mix, by the winter's fire,
 Careless repose with intellectual joy ?

Centre of all affections, sacred Home !
 To say the truth, I have found the world abroad
 So fenced and guarded for most prudent self,
 So jealous of precedence, and contact,
 So hard to win, so willing to repel,
 That I have ceased at length to woo its smile,
 And sought to narrow close my heart, and find
 My solace solely underneath thy thatch.
 There live connubial love, and household peace,
 And childish innocence ; and if a thought,
 Worming with secret and uneasy sense,
 Solicitous, may stir the close-pent earth,

Trodden as base, and lying low despised,
'Tis seldom other, than how those bright eyes
And gladsome smiles shall wrestle with the world.
It pities me ; but I remember still
That He who gave their being, giveth means
To keep it, as He taught,—if rectitude,
Wearing truth's silver radiance, like a star,
Hold watch above them, and conduct the way.

BOOK III.

THE CATHEDRAL AISLE.—THE OLD PLEASANCE.—RETURN OF BOOKS AT EVENING.—THE FIRST ENTRANCES OF KNOWLEDGE INTO “THE REMOTEST ISLANDS OF THE WEST.”—THE WELSH BISHOPS DERIVED FROM ST. PAUL:—THE IRISH FROM ST. JOHN.—ROME’S USURPATION IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY.—THE JEALOUS INFLUENCE OF THE HIERARCHY IN BEHALF OF ROME FOR FOUR CENTURIES.—THE REFORMATION PERFECTED UNDER ELIZABETH.—THE DUTY OF OBEDIENCE.—OLD WAYS.—WHITGIFT.—IMPROPRIATIONS OF CHURCH LANDS.—ALMA MATER.—ABBOTT’S LAX RULE.—THE MARTYRDOM OF LAUD.—MILTON.—JEREMY TAYLOR’S RETREAT.—THE RESTORATION.—THE CHURCH’S FAITHFUL GUIDANCE THEN.—WALTON.—THE BISHOPS SENT TO THE TOWER BY JAMES.—THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH DEPRESSED.—THE GROWTH OF HERESY.—THE REVIVAL OF CHURCH PRINCIPLES.—A FAITHFUL PRELATE.—CONCLUSION.

The Church.

I’VE stood alone in high cathedral aisle,
To gaze upon the scrolled and glorious tints
Figuring with holy forms its windows dim,
That let in heaven’s light, but nowhere showed
Aught of the world: and with uplifted eye
Have traced the arch sublime, or monuments
Of former men, in studied language writ
Of kindred with their loved pursuits,—to know
If the choice words were worthy of their fame—

Condensed, and clear. But if amidst these turns
 Of graver thought, the officious sexton came,
 Mingling his oft retailed stories trite,—
 As petty lawyer talking for his fee,
 Where the good cause needs commendation none,—
 The sacred host of angel images,
 That hover nigh where good and wise men sleep,
 Fled far, discomfited: or they looked back
 From their dispersion, cold and pale,
 Like Dido's dim and evanescent shade,
 When,—as the moon late changed, a silver line—
 It flitted past, at distance, and displeased.
 For fancy flees from the hard-featured world :
 And if life's eager care in sadness search
 The heart, it cannot dwell on sweet delights
 Of gentle poesy. They are only seen
 As the bright colours of the heavenly bow
 When the sun shines: but if usurping clouds
 Spread wide, the lovely vision will not stay.

Yet have I felt, and often joyed to feel,
 And sought to feel again soft sadness' touch
 In old, deserted walks of pleasance ground,
 Under tall trees, planted in other days
 For state in lengthened alleys, now o'ergrown
 With grasses rank, save where the woodman comes,
 Or cowherd wont to pass, or truant boys
 To gather the wild cherries; and the beech
 Hath strewn its nuts profuse. Old yew-trees there,
 Enough for many corps of archery,
 Hold high their foliage dark on naked stem
 Fantastic; but o'er all its bark suffused
 With rosy tint,—like the blood mantling rich
 On Moorish brow,—or wine, when purple seen

I' the light through cellar glass. There old brick
walls

Measured by miles around, with copings rent,
Secure no charge within of hall or bower ;
Nought but the common herd, and forest walk,
And ruins whose poor shame green nature clothes.
The dragon-fly, flitting, like little sprite,
On sylphine wing, in vest of heavenly blue,
Glanced by, where through the boughs, the summer
rays

Played on the waters ; and their lily spread
Her broad and olive leaf ; and golden flowers
Half-raised their heads above the dark, still pool,
As if they did not love the gloomy depth,
And fain would find the day. Mysterious power !
That guides their growth, and pushes their approach
To verge of light, and yet withholds escape ;
Like poor Eurydice on the cold wave,
With languid neck reclined, and swimming eyes.

Passing with speed comes the long stream of life
On indefatigable, dusky wing,
Flying at twilight eve broad from the south.
Above those formal sycamores, their beds,
They soar and sweep with clamorous joy ; and part
In the far western light are dimly seen,
Like clouds that, small and black, as heralds ride
Beneath the wan sky fast, preparing storm ;
Or those dark, living specks remote, might seem
The spots upon the evening's mournful veil
Floating sublime, as from the gloomy night
She turns away. Along the glades that ope
Through these forsaken shades, the church tower's
seen ;

And captive thought dwells there, in willing chain,
 And with the things it shrines ; and so, through long
 And cloudy vistas of her history,
 I'll look forth on her place, and holy men.

The patient sages journeying by a star
 Were led to the poor lodging, where abode
 The treasure of heaven's mercy to mankind.
 So, from the east, the knowledge best for man
 Hath emanated ever, as the light,
 To illuminate the barbarous, heathen isles.
 The great sea westward, to the ancient world
 Was as the broad Atlantic to our own,
 The highway of their ships, and battle-field.
 Before the record of Homeric songs,
 The barks of Sidon oft had borne her arts,
 Her sculptured cups, and store of mellow wine,
 Through all the labyrinths of the *Æ*gean isles
 To panting Troas, then encumbered sore
 With stern Achaia's chiefs, beleaguering
 Troy walls : and Tyre, whose merchants princes were,
 Traversed that Midland sea from end to end,
 And passed those giant sea-gates pillared sure
 By mountain heights, which o'er an ocean looked
 Vast, solitary then,—admiring still
 The fearless sun at evening, as he sank
 Within the bosom of the watery world.
 - Albion she reached, and doubtless bartered there
 Her curious wares for Cornwall's mimic ore ;
 Such gauds, as ancient Greece in story tells,
 The Egyptian galley brought to Argos' strand,
 Vain Io snatched, and sailed away to Nile.

The Roman found our isles, too, when in Gaul
 He had heard a tale of farther western lands,

And stood at length in arms upon the shore ;
While all his pomp of war along the plain—
The glancing sheen of banners, streeted tents,
And eagles, helms, spears, shields, and mailed men—
Rejoiced in glory 'fore the setting sun.
He watched with wonder the retiring ebb,
And the tide's glad return ; which came with waves
Fresh, eager, crested high, in foaming speed
Curling their white tops toward the wished-for shore ;
Yet still would sink upon the sandy beech,
As when the steps of feeble infancy
Are fain to reach a smiling mother's knees,
And come short of their aim, and drop their charge.
That famous man, whose acts imperial then
Do still retain an influence o'er the world,
Reached Britain's isle, and claimed it for proud Rome,
Vainly as yet ;—the unconscious harbinger
Of arts and manners to these sea-girt realms.
Thus early times and later had revealed
To eastern climes the islands by the west,—
Wide roaming traffic, and the lust of war ;
And then glad tidings from the Day-spring came,
Came with the ships of Spain, or o'er the plains
Of subjugated Gaul ; and Tarsus' saint
Might haply reach those shores, when even the West's
Remotest isles he visited, and left
Memorial sure, as seems, in those who claimed
After six ages' silent lapse—no more—
Orders successional, apostolic sway,
And high traditionary rule, derived
From hand of him by wonders designate,
And separated then by Holy Church
To toils, and pain,—as spake the Spirit's will.

And such the frown upon Wales' rugged brow,
 When Roman bishop sought, in pride of power,
 Homage the ancient British Church ne'er knew,
 As gathered, when she spied proud Edward's march
 Down Snowdon's shaggy steeps: so Anglian monk,
 The Venerable Bede, later an age,
 In Saxon story tells,—though linked to those
 Who loved the sway of Rome. But Rome not yet
 Had snared all the world, although her toils
 Were spread, and she had claimed a sovereign rule;
 And he, who Austin sent to Albion's shore.
 In pity for Rome's choicest slavery—
 That, born to God, the Christian faith, and name,
 They might be angels,—protest late had urged
 Against such rule, as type of antichrist.

To Ireland early came the heavenly light;
 For 't seems the will Divine that she should, aye,
 And in all things, share Britain's weal or woe.
 That sacred light, wherever man may pass
 The deep, that only seems to part our race,
 Or can descry the mountain forms that rest,
 Like biding clouds, upon the utmost sea,—
 Or, hath the ear but heard there is a place,—
 As needful as the sun's, is sure to come,
 And bless all eyes. The Celtic Briton stood
 On Cambria's hills, and saw beyond the main
 The outline dim of Erin's western isle,
 At evening, when the sun had just gone down;
 And highlands bare in low sierra rose
 Before the fading glory he had left:
 And the same bark which brought his Belgic sires,
 Explored the further secrets of the wave,
 And found another home; and never ceased

That perilous intercourse which doubtless was,
Ere Cæsar's gallies sailed past Mona's steeps,

And so, their kindred life shared mutual light,
Though glimmering weakly o'er a barbarous land ;
And when four ages had borne past the car
Of silent times, 'tis said an apostle came
From those fair plains, where the clear Arar glides,
And blends his crystal wave with rapid Rhone,—
Impressed the Church with model of just rule,
And raised her walls in many a wilderness.
He brought the wisdom, which, from Holy John,
Ignatius, his disciple, sent the Church
Of Gaul, in Irenaeus ; nor would those
He taught, know other rule of Paschal feast ;
And Erin's holy bishops, where they might
Use hospitable lodge, in churchman's roof
Of wealthier England, when on errand there,
Refused the brotherhood of prelates strange,
Who sanctioned other use than good St. John.
Like him who, in the Highland vales and glens,
Or thinly peopled Hebrides, hath heard
The ways of men in courts, or camps of war,—
And learned the labours of the field, and arts
Whereby men plough, and build, and weave, and
wear,
From former generations ; and averse
To adopt new practice, shuns his teacher's skill.
But when, at length, the twelfth age had half run
Its course, that man's life matcheth still in vain,—
Rome offered names of dignity,—and palls,
The livery of her menials ; and such pomp
Amidst degenerate ignorance, and rude life,
Won Ireland's simple bishops to her side ;

They gave their independence for attire,
 And the Church kissed the proud Italian's feet.
 Then Malachi of Connor pandered base
 To aid the papal lust of worldly sway ;
 Which other course pursued, nor other claim
 Of boundless domination then advanced,
 When Erin's beauteous isle, that daylight leaves
 The last, unwitting kindled those desires,—
 Than, when that arrogant and odious power
 Dispensed to monarchs all the western world.
 Alas ! that monarchs e'er, and politics,
 So tread the Church's honour in the dust,
 That any, in impatience, look for aids
 Unlawful, to support their helpless state.
 For fain the rich and noble would prescribe
 Her laws, because they yield her of their wealth—
 (To best of uses consecrate)—and buy
 Her office up, when they afford her help.
 Obedience they withhold ; nor love to hear
 Her counsels, given under solemn weight
 Of things eternal over temporal things.
 Indignities are dealt her portion now ;
 They take her means ; and when they give her back
 A little dole, they tell the world how great
 Their charity. But witness incorrupt,
 And faithful zeal, haply, must face contempts,
 Hatreds, and violence,—haply no worse
 For her perpetual health, if not too much ;
 As Herod's mockery, and Pilate's sin,—
 And Judas' charity, which held the poor
 So dear a care, it grudged the costly love
 Poured on His Body,—who hath hid the name,
 But hath proclaimed the work to all the world.

Yet Rome that claims, is cautious not to keep
 Inheritance of distant heathen lands,
 And hath dispensed, without possessing, worlds
 Unknown; whence, with armed heel pressing the soil,
 Kings asked, in idle phrase, a mighty gift
 Their grasp already had. Thus Ireland's isle
 Was freely given and asked on fair pretence,
 And then Plantagenet, with mailed hand,
 Riveted sure the thraldom of her Church ;
 But oiled the fetters' clanking, by her fruits
 Of increase saved, and revenues confirmed.
 Then, to his feudal homagers of Wales
 He added—more his own—high lands as fair,
 Where Wicklow's mountain lakes and woody glens
 Possess the soul with loveliness, that haunts
 The thought forever, where it once hath been.

The curtain of four hundred years withdrawn,
 Scenes hang remote, picturing an iron sway,
 When England's pride repelled the suppliant serf
 Who, wretched, asked the boon of England's law.
 The hierarchy watched the arm of rule,
 And if its force they wielded, th' isle was calm ;
 But wasted soon when laws alone pronounced,—
 While Rome the paramount displayed her power,
 Exulting in the fray her arts embroiled.
 Thus, in midwinter's gloom, before the colds
 In this moist, northern clime, the winds are still
 At times for many days,—and the dim heaven
 Bends tranquil over all ; till the air, at length,
 Tired of long rest,—jealous, as not content
 With quiet operation less observed,
 Evokes its power, exalts a mighty voice,
 And, as some demon, did bestride the gale,

Rages at midnight round the pole, and yells,
 With strange, unearthly sounds of fiendish hate ;
 The woods roar like chafed seas,—crowding away
 With effort vain before the tempest's lash ;
 And storied elms fall prostrate, or are maimed
 Of half their height,—their mighty heads reversed,
 And roots upheaved reluctant into day ;
 Tall battlements rush down precipitate,
 Or seem, a moment poised in air, to choose
 The spot of their alighting ruin ; roofs
 On high in streeted cities, shake abroad
 Their rendings on the blast ;—so priestly power,
 Rivalling the force of kings in barbarous land,
 Oft reared its voice, and roused the tribes to war.
 At length a twilight came in Tudor's reign,
 The monarch Romanist, though dispart from Rome :
 Her creed yet lingered with its champion stern,
 Though papal now no more. But, weak the growth
 Of reformation, where the races' strife
 Had long engendered hatred, that rejoiced
 To find, amidst the ferment, ready vent,
 By bursting all the joints and staving bands,
 Which held the choice wine of their duty in ;
 Retaliating separate laws of state
 When union might have been of race and faith,
 By alienation from their island Church.

Wisely in commonwealths the female rule
 Is not excluded : godliness and peace
 A mother cherishes ; there order finds
 Example, commerce care, and arts their praise.
 The universal hierarchy then,
 Save two, or one, confessed the taint of time ;

They cleansed the house, its cobwebs swept, and
threw

The windows wide, robing Religion pure
In English garb. Thus Catholic order stands
Inviolate, and pillared on broad base
In Ireland's Church,—from primal source Divine
Transmitting powers that live, though ill maintained.

One only Power there is in all the world,
And all obedience therefore is but one ;
One only Truth, the fountain of all truth
And righteous law ; and, were all minds
Pure as His bosom breathed that man might live,
Their will had been harmonious with that law
Their acts the same, and man still very good,
Although our goodness reacheth not to Him.
So in the household of some mighty lord,
Each knows his proper place in-doors, or out,
And stands and waits, or ploughs and digs the field ;
And all unite to work the good of all ;
And in the richest house the servants share
More good, than e'er the master makes his own.
And as the bees, throughout the summer fields,
Gather sweet treasures for the common store,
While others work within 'gainst winter's cold,
Obey strict laws, and never break their league ;
Yea, e'en the little creature by the brook
Humming around the lips of some wild flower,
Far, far from home, while dusky night comes on,
So that you scarce could say, did you not know
Its habits, what employ detains it there,
Is yet unwilling to forbear its task,
Working for use of all. Thus, on the world
Of minds had there not fallen a darker night

Of ignorance, and will depraved, each soul
 Had laboured, even in humblest guise,
 And furthest place, to do the things his own ;
 If chance he might be called to higher trust
 And nobler works,—but yet content withal.

The other creatures have not failed to keep
 The law of their own nature ; only minds
 Endued with reason : and though man's delict
 Binds them to suffer woe, hunger and death,
 Yet this less painfully, as unforeseen ;
 And so, as they deserve, less cursed than man ;—
 And though they pine and die, they never drank
 Intemperate draughts to fire the blood, or sank
 Their souls with surfeiting ; but still they ate
 The pure and simple grass, and drank the brook
 That runs among the pebbles full of health,
 And active still to keep it as it runs.

Man will not know what fruits Obedience brings,
 He cannot but by patient trial know
 How blest with spiritual good the use
 To bend beneath the hand of discipline ;
 How meek humility, in walks obscure,
 Pursues the way of peace to seats of bliss,
 And feels a present heaven. Then knowledge leaves
 Her proud and airy heights, sits on the ground,
 Yet prunes her feeble wing from earthly stain,
 That she may safely soar, and passionless,
 In quest of hidden good : and sober joys
 She misses never on her patient way,
 The cordial drop, which heaven benign lets fall
 On healthful hearts conscious of duty done.

Obedience is the silver stair which climbs
 By easy steps from earth to highest heaven.

Upon that stair, vision sublime beheld
 The face of angels ; and their Lord himself
 Descended down, and soiled his holy feet
 With dust,—a patient pilgrim through the vale
 Of Baca wet with tears ; yet, made it wells
 Of coolness, when apart he passed the night
 In prayer, on the near mountain's lonely side,—
 His sole delight to do his Father's will.
 Yet his resembled much those mournful Prayers
 Which the old Grecian bard hath wondrous shown
 Treading the earth with slow and painful steps,
 And wrinkled brow, and sidelong look depressed,
 Following offence in shame o'er all the earth
 To heal her wrongful dealing 'mongst mankind.

Obedience ! 'tis by thee the heavens are strong,
 And that the current winds which poise the air,
 Blow, and the waters roll with yielding tide,
 And serve with all their powers continually :
 And every shining star, howe'er it seem
 With strange caprice to wander, still returns,
 To tread its viewless circle still again.
 By thee the fair moon in the heavens sublime
 Keeps on her course, tinging the skirts o' the clouds
 Down far beneath ; through which, when black in
 night,
 And hurrying broken o'er the storm-swept sky,
 We spy her orb serene amidst the rack,
 Fair and serene like her, God's Church pursues
 Her righteous path amidst an evil world,
 While all the elements around are storm.
 So have I heard cold January's winds
 With the new year sweep wild o'er dale and wood ;
 But low beneath the hill, on such a night,

The tempest raved with little hurt around
 The cottage pale, shaking the looser joints
 Haply of doors, or through the keyhole's bore
 Whistling intense and shrill, while plashed the rain :
 But all within was cheerful light, and warmth ;
 Or if some needful care its safety claimed,
 It was, to lay an eave with ponderous sod,
 Or, stretch a post in longitude across
 The dubious flickering of a single spot.
 And thus in her humility the Church
 Dwells safe upon the solid ground of truth,
 And calmly hears without the stormy words,
 And threatening voices of an evil world.
 But oft the priest, inert, or ignorant,
 Or weak, seduced along the devious path
 Where vulgar praise strews flowers, asks what would
 please.
 The popular ear ; rather than by the lines,
 And golden compasses, and measured rules,
 Wherewith the Church hath charged the builder's
 hand,
 Chisels the stones to pile her edifice,
 Prepared for heaven, and for obedience there ;
 As those, old fables tell, Amphion's lyre
 Called to united strength in Theban wall.
 To him the Church's law is writ in vain ;
 For him, in vain, the monarch with his realm
 Sanctioned it sure, and bound it on his soul
 By all the ties of duty ; and in vain
 The voice of the chief Pastor frequent calls
 With faithful oversight,—“ Fulfil God's law !
 The judgment is not yours, where words are writ ;
 The Church's voice to you 's the voice of God ;

Feed ye the flock within the bounds prescribed ;
 Beyond, the greedy wolf prowls dangerous
 And wakeful, though the streams flow full,
 And wide the plain : the flock is not your own ;
 The general charge of it, and of yourselves
 Belongs to me,—the lambs, the sheep to feed.
 If ye obey, ye shall not answer make
 For aught results ;—the issue rests with God,
 Who binds to public virtue public weal :
 A self-willed confidence takes a serpent up,
 Which twines, and bites her bosom as she flies ;
 And though with bright and eagle eye she face
 The risen sun, fast flying to the morn,—
 She drops in galling pains, and grovelling death.
 Beware, then, lest, when Christ's dread throne is set,
 Thy bishop should have cause to charge thee there ;
 Thine will the loss be.” Vain, alas, the call !
 The voice of crowds singeth a siren song :
 The voice of crowds mingleth dark words of fear.
 And yet, since, while we obey, we only walk
 In the old paths, and stand on the old ways,
 Traced by our fathers' thoughtful piety,
 And marked as wise on scrolls that we may read ;
 And since we only sit beneath the shades
 Which sheltered them, and cooled their pilgrim brows,
 The very ancientness hath what to love.
 When rude the south-west blows, wetting and chill,
 And I must seek for shelter,—be it where
 My thought may find employment while I wait,—
 Where old oak, or tall ash of mighty stem
 Stands with tough roots, like brawny sinews, bared,
 Or the full veins of some huge champion strong ;
 Whose height is, haply, hung with wreaths and fruit

Of ivy old; where, even in wintry hour,
 The very banks hard by, and aged stones
 Are rich with nature's cunning diligence,
 And unobtrusive wonders; where the moss,
 Or lichen gray spreads the dull stone with life;
 Where plants that idle haste misnames rank weeds,
 Though medicinal, grow in fairy forms
 Of elegant leaf, which winter cannot fade:
 The great tree's bark is rough, and rudely scarred,
 And homely brown; yet, question it,—you'll find
 It needful to secure the inward core.

So have I seen some ancient house of prayer
 Sombre and dusk without,—yet, when I scanned
 Its just proportions, still my mind was pleased;
 And when I entered its high doors, and saw
 The uses it inclosed, its sculptured stalls,
 Its monumental brasses, pillared gloom,
 I loved the antique pile wasted and dim,
 More than the finished forms of modern skill,
 And, when my prayer is public, be it there.
 And so, I'd walk in all good, ancient ways;
 And if the princes of the Church enthroned,
 By solemn judgment press us to return
 To the old paths,—let us with ready will,
 And a glad mind, observe that beacon light
 Reared from the depths of their experience past,
 Or by their higher learning clear derived
 From ancient wisdom treasured by the Church;
 Yielding their spiritual power, when clothed
 With character paternal only, sway
 O'er our obedience, with as cheerful mind,
 As if it stood, like stern Minerva, armed.
 If they forbear to grasp the spiritual sword,

Nor wear the ensigns of constraining force,
 But, as dear fathers, bless, reprove, or warn,—
 Their admonition, though no temporal power
 Enforce it, is more dreadful to just souls,
 As God the vindication then reserves ;
 And, vowed to follow with glad mind and will
 Their holy counsels, we may well the more
 Follow them gladly,—as they travelled once
 The same uneasy road, and doubtless fared
 Like us, amidst the ungenerous multitude ;
 For, their high state declares them faithful found
 In lower place. And hence 'tis scorn to hear
 The protest of officious ignorance,
 Or simulating malice, when 'tis pleased
 Invidious difference to mark between
 The working, and superior ministries.
 As if the Prelates' anxious vigilance,
 Their actual service, and the very mark
 Their station offers to pale envy's shafts
 Were not alloy enough in the fine gold
 Of their espousals, and the ordered power
 Their virtues and their learning have attained.

Nor, once, they dreaded to reprove proud kings.
 When with firm hand grave Whitgift held the reins,
 Elizabeth he warned, in wayward mood,
 To shun the eagle's fate, that greedy stole
 The altar's sacred fires, and burned her nest,
 When she had thought to feed her gaping young.
 And this he did in stern integrity,
 And faith to Holy Church. To her his heart
 Turned, at its latest hour, with anxious love,
 And his last breath was “for the Church of God.”
 The monarch, with too arbitrary will,

Had then in England seized, and parcelled out
Rich abbeys and church-lands to craving peers,
And hungry knights, and sycophants o' the court;
As the sheer power and luxuries of one
Were better than a peaceful, duteous choir
To pious studies vowed, religious hours,
Learning's grave work, and gracious charities.
Those beautiful retreats had haply once
Been only a bare hill, or marish waste,
O'er which the plover wild flapped his gray wing
With creaking cry amidst the stormy gale;
Or where, upon the thin and frosted snow
Of February's splashy, cheerless colds,
The flocking field-fares searched their needful food.
But meadows gay soon clothed the rushy fen,
The spouting springs, unseen, fed the soft lake
Below, gathering a wealth of waters wide and clear,
And still the wild-fowl's haunt, with the white swan's,
Houseled, though not domestic, near the shore.
What, though the siren-indolence had stolen
On those retreats, made lovely by the care
Of monks,—and arts of culture theirs alone,—
Amidst the neighbouring towers of barons fierce,
Who never wrote their name;—was the best use
To throw the only wealth the ignoble or mean
Might then aspire to, in the quiet paths
Of learning, to the callous sword-belt's clasp?
Could not just laws have pruned exuberance,
Expelled lewd vice, and stimulated toil,
Fixing such generous discipline, and rule,
As would have made those churchmen's lazy seats
Religion's home, and well-springs to the land
Of arts and manners? But they now are lost

To all the Church's use ; and where the day
 Counted its hours by acts of piety,
 Returns of studies, or, by pages writ.
 To hoard fair learning's treasures for the eyes
 Of men unborn, and wide dispense her stores,—
 There haply now the gambler, rackrenter,
 Or heartless worldling feeds his luxury,
 Grasping in ready palm a mine of wealth
 Moist with the sweat,—what know I—with the tears,
 That trickled from the brows of wretched men
 Ill-fed, o'erwrought, perplexed with charge of life ;
 No care to him, but as the living tools
 To work it out ; whose faces he ne'er saw,
 Although the throne delivered them in trust,
 That he might be a father to their wants,
 Provide their welfare, comfort their distress.
 For, these have also duties with the poor,
 No less than slothful churchman ;—their rewards
 At least are more. He, like the tethered horse,—
 Of daily labours at a master's will,
 And mercy of the meanest groom or hind,—
 Feeding where only his peculiar jaws
 Can gather food,—toils on with youth, and age,
 The infant from the lap, the dying bed,
 In weekly, daily rounds of solemn works.
 His means, taxed equally with other men's,
 The state presses with cruel hand, and wrenching
 screw
 Resistless, unrelenting,—and assigns,
 With easy liberality, a fourth
 To their rapacious grasp, who insatiate point
 With angry vehemence, or felt, or feigned,
 To wealth they affect to see, and envy still ;

Commit oppression that makes wise men mad,
 And leave the married priest in daily fear
 His children's board may fail of daily bread.
 Most full of gracious talk, doubtless they are,
 How that the poor must have instruction high,—
 No mention made of God, or of his Church
 To be their guide ; and, under such pretence,
 Not much averse to further sacrilege,—
 As robbers think their plunder most secured,
 When all the band partake of it alike.
 But thus the bee makes honey,—guards it too
 With tiny sting from ordinary wrong ;
 But—sulphurous fires applied by ruthless hand—
 The little creatures which had stored that wealth,
 Must perish in the smoke, and all their hives
 Seized safely by the spoiler, gorge and pall
 Fastidious appetite with luscious sweets.
 Well hath thy fervent spirit, Hooker, traced
 In gravest speech, and argument severe,
 The prowling footsteps of the crafty fox,
 Devouring more, with jaws that scarcely moved
 In thine own time, than the wolf's hateful fangs,
 That haycock made in the eighth Henry's days.
 Thou bodedst thence, long erst, the Church's fall,—
 Allowing but the span of human life,
 Till that should come, which would be little joy
 To those who should behold her desolate.

Yet here, Elizabeth, thy royal care
 Provided learning for the purer faith,
 By social discipline in college halls ;
 And gently invited men's reluctant aid
 To do themselves a good they could not see—
 (So rude they were)—and all their future race.

But this is sovereign power in proper sphere ;
 Surveying from that height the extent of things,
 And loving minds too well to heed their strife,
 Or cold indifference to wisdom's schemes.

And, soon, for these, another reign reserved
 The fruits of wilds to be reclaimed,—and fenced
 From roving feet, and force of savage raid.

Strange that few kings appreciate that praise,
 And eare to wreath the ivy with their crowns.

But, they who can, must first have toiled themselves
 To win thee, Learning,—for thou wouldest be sought
 If won,—have felt a vanity in state,—

And must have hearts that lean towards humble men,
 And yet, no vulgar thoughts—(they vex the proud)—
 Admire the ingenious work of such, and know
 Large part of earthly joys derived from them,
 And yield their life a liberal reward.

Less wonder then that kings so seldom look
 For glory to their reign from smiles of thine ;
 Though wondrous glory 's on the face of kings
 Reflected from thy lights ;—their palaces
 More beautiful, their thrones more golden bright
 With thee, than all the train and full resort
 Of ermined nobles, and of ladies fair ;
 More lasting thy soft radiance, than the gleam
 Of polished arms, and all their pomp of war.

As, late, once more I stood within thy home
 In Erin,—and the stir beyond its walls
 In lovely city, hoarse and faint was heard; and then,
 Through open spaccs, came to the ear
 The roll of life, impatient of delay,—
 For pleasure called,—pleasure, or gain,—

The whirl, that makes th' head reel, and the heart
sick,

Fresh come from country quiet and green shades
To a feverish scene, that knows him not, and is
A noisy show. And too, at times, break in
The distant tramp of mounted soldiery,
And clangour of the martial trumpet's breath;—
But all thy courts and gardens still the gaze
Of the everlasting sunshine filled serene,
As splendour there and peace would ever dwell.
No voice from them was heard, save, passing near,
The gownsman's, in some deep debate,
And earnest quest of learned mystery,—
Or bell summoning at duty's hour,—
Or rouqueries taught the tongue of green macaw
Rejoicing in the sun, as in 's own land.
And all around rose the tall chiselled piles
Of grand Palladian art, meet for the home
Of Science, in their learned proportions just.
Few faces I had known,—yet some there were;
But changed by time or studies,—weak and pale;
And one, the poorest man who knew me, touched
My heart, by kindly interest he took
In what was then my care. But I rejoiced
To see the beauty more, where Learning dwells,
And had survived poor nurture, and rude times.
So some great oak, the glory of the lawn,
Spreads its vast arms; and there the fallow deer
Resort for shade and sweet society.
The acorn, haply, whence it sprang was sown
When all these grounds were savage wilderness;
And it grew up amidst alarms, and sounds
Of fall of thousand other hastier growths

Around it : their unvalued stems and roots
 Are gone,—nor now their early place is known,—
 The green grass growtheth o'er ; but it remains,—
 And generations on its trunk have writ,
 In hope their name coeval thus may live.

But some, who were of old, are only known
 By treacheries they o'erlooked in highest trust.
 When Abbott sat in England's primal chair,
 He laid the rod of discipline aside,
 And held a careless rule o'er those who came
 In cleric vest to rich men's tables. There
 They warped the minds they should have taught and
 trained,

Flattered their pride of heart, and love of power
 Usurped within God's Church,—and soon forgat
 The Pastor of the flock, for whom they served
 Their holy office even in castle hall.
 But warning voice was none from Lambeth towers ;
 Abbott had sheathed the spiritual sword,
 And left the Church to trouble ;—but took down
 The bow and arrows for the gay green-wood,—
 By which he found, in hours of idleness,
 As deep a trouble for his own late days.

Then Laud received the charge, and tried to stay
 The coming ruin,—and to cleanse the stains
 Upon the soiled garments of the Church ;
 To raise her from the ground,—to claim for her
 Authority to teach sole, and her own,—
 To show in her, the authentic, living type,
 And sacramental symbol reverend
 Of her ascended Lord,—to wake men's thoughts
 Again, to solemn awe, and wary walk
 In holy places, amidst holy things,—

And to thrust out the world from sacred courts
 And sacred offices. Alas ! the attempt
 Firm, patient, just, was ruin to himself :
 As, though a stronger, steadier hand hath risen
 To the reins fallen upon the fierce, high necks
 Of horses from the stall, yoked to one car,—
 They flee in fury down the rocky steep,—
 They reach the bridge that works of men have
 stretched
 Across the flood, and into ruin's arms
 O'erleap the parapet : so the mad career
 Of England's Commons, seized with causeless rage,
 Swept England's Church and monarchy away.
 Great Milton's bitter spirit could foretel
 The Church's ruin near, threatening her priests ;—
 And, those who had contrived the overthrow,
 Rifled her doctrine, stolen her people's hearts,
 And taught vain men to seek their faith elsewhere,
 Than where alone its fulness can be found—
 Where rests the pillar and the ground of truth—
 Such men could bode the future they had prepared :
 A fall's foreseen upon a slippery floor,
 And ill is augured in an evil world.
 Ah, glorious Milton ! could a poet's soul,
 Warm with the earliest influence of heaven,
 So freeze, with pride's cold breath, that the owl's
 shriek
 Sounds, in thy Doric flute's sad elegy,
 With music sweet as night-winds on the strings,
 Sadly sublime as the dimmed, waning moon,
 And mournful as the plaintive halcyon's cry ?
 Oh, England ! thou wast then a bull bestrode
 By bloody prize-fighters in freedom's name ;

Prompt with all arts and wiles, and subtle words
 To darken counsel, and divert the eyes
 Of meaner men, as with a giddy flag
 Of colours false, and net the unwary feet ;
 And guilty faction, then, struck at the life
 That sat on thrones, in Church, or palace hall.
 The same pale day which saw with sickly eye
 The gory trunk of England's Primate sink
 In martyrdom on the black scaffold's floor,
 Saw all her books of holy worship torn
 By public act from men's reluctant hands.
 Closely the frown of dark, religious hate
 Gathered o'er all we had in highest place
 Of reverend, or holy, sceptred, throned,
 When, by foul hands, the sacred head of Laud
 Fell from the block with its white hairs defiled,
 And spiteful Rome was matched in cruelty.
 'Twas winter wild when such despite was done ;—
 And after, when they smote the life of Charles,
 His scowling glooms oppressed the joyless world ;
 As if thy blood, as has been said of thee,
 Derived then from the elements a taint,
 Enough to raise thy suicidal hand
 Against the estates of royal majesty
 And priesthood, trusts to thy wise use and care.

Oft, on the mountain heights behind my home,
 I've stood at evening hour, when lurid glooms
 Crowded away, far in the southern sky,
 To gather round Mourne's snowy peaks sublime,
 As went grim Mars with clouds to father Jove :
 But in the west shone Neagh's sea and sky
 Beneath the setting sun ; so Taylor's name,
 Beyond that tall, dark march to cast down thrones,

Hath left a glory on those waters pale,
 Which, without thought of thee, I ne'er behold,
 So much of grandeur nature owes to mind.
 Frequent thy pilgrim feet, on pastoral cares
 Intent, have duteous trod those plains and hills.
 Wilder they were, and wooded thickly then
 With groves of oak ; and less of culture fair
 Had won the rich land to the use of men.
 Where I would else but see, though with pleased eye,
 Only the sheen of waters smooth and vast,
 I think upon thy lonely islet there,
 And pious spirit, richly learned mind,
 Musing on nature's face with holy love,
 Or on the world thou 'dst left ; while distant huts
 Of fishermen, upon the further shore,
 Enjoyed the evening beam ; and women came
 And spread their nets upon the pure, fine sands,
 Or hung them on the walls ; and children near
 Waded the waters fresh, or o'er the flood
 Cast pebbles ; or they watched thy little boat
 To hermit isle passing on studious way,
 Nor knew it bare the first of living minds,
 A courtly scholar, comforter of kings ;
 A priestly confessor, who there had found
 A refuge from the hate of regicides.

But soon the universal English heart
 Swelled high with one wide wish, to see her Church
 And monarchy restored. So, when the sea
 Low ebbed hath left the strand, and the tired eye
 Hath looked too long upon the unsightly ooze,
 And foul weeds dank, and cumber of loose stones,—
 And the heavy feet have trod, with weariness
 And pain, the yielding sands,—the waters glad

Returning, bring full tide,—a merry dance
 Of fresh and glittering waves, and breezes cool,
 And joy to overflowing : the sea fills
 His own just bed, stretches his mighty arms,
 And smiles. The Church then, cleansed of breath
 profane,
 Choired her pure Catholic Liturgies to heaven ;—
 Which would not altered be, or yield their strength
 To shallow ignorance, or the unlearned pride
 Of men o' the world ; but still would worship God
 In all their beauty, and in all their power ;
 Grand, wise, and simple harmonies,—from times
 Primeval gathered, when the Church was one.
 Hence England's Church was strong in ministries,
 And well she wielded then her powers Divine
 To teach, and rule ;—though men were hard to rule,
 When,—reverence, and decent rites disused,
 And, the reluctant knee in rigid pride
 Grown stiff, and manners braced in iron mask
 Of strong hypocrisy long time,—men burst
 Its clasps at length ; and then,—riot ran wild :
 So the steel-bow snaps with a sudden bound
 The strained string, and quivers through its length,
 And shakes the arm that grasps its middle springs.
 For spiritual power tried hard essay
 To bridle that excess : nor yet could purge
 The dross, which use had mixed to dim the gold
 Worked richly on the Church's vesture fine ;
 Nor from within expel, by watchfulness,
 The leaven of opinions and mean forms
 The grim, fantastic puritan had brought ;
 And hence we feel, even at this trying hour,
 Its dark and baleful workings in God's House.

Wild though it were, that was a glorious age
 Of holy learning, nervous phrase and pure,
 Thoughts masculine and brave, within the Church.
 For, in the assault of foes frequent, and long
 Victorious,—she had learned to sway her arms
 Defensive, with a practised use and skill.
 O Walton ! how we love thee for those words
 Of sweetness and persuasion, which have told
 How some, her sons, once thought, and lived, and
 taught,
 Seeking the Church's will in all their ways,—
 Sure, thus, they should not miss the will of God.
 O Walton ! well thou didst deserve the life
 Thou leddest beside the laughing brooks, and banks
 Under green trees, where insects in the noon
 InnumEROus danced, threading their dizzy maze
 In the sunshine ; and not a sound was heard,
 Save their still hum, or waters wandering near,
 Or, when the merle called from the wood afar,
 Hid close in thickest boughs ; or the agile trout
 Brake sudden from the flood, and passive dropped,
 His insect prey secured,—and thy heart leaped
 To make himself thy own. And then, repose
 In ale-house parlour with its sanded floor,
 And high-backed chairs of carved and curious oak,
 And supper light of fresh fish from the stream,
 Dressed to thine own just rule ; and then the bed
 Fragrant as that, to which, in treacherous hour,
 The Acidalian queen bare in her lap
 Acneas' son away. Or else thy life
 Was led in courtly halls, though lowly born,—
 Associate with the virtuous, and the wise ;
 Where chastened grandeur, and grave dignity,

And sober state marked those who ruled God's
 Church,
 And elegance in all the forms of life ;
 But elegance in mind and manners more,
 Pure sentiment, and conversation sage,—
 Not of the lands and palaces of men
 Around,—nor of the lewd scene's best buffoon,—
 But, what concerns us more to learn and know,—
 What is man's highest wisdom,—brings him peace
 On earth below, and happiness in heaven.
 Ah, blest old man ! thy simple life was like
 One of thine own pure streams, with placid breast
 That visits quiet fields, and glad reflects
 A thousand flowers, seeking the distant sea
 In safe seclusion and tranquillity.

Deep reverence the Church taught for monarchs
 then ;
 Should she teach less,—or does she ?—that they bear
 A right Divine to our obedience due ;
 And that the royal sceptre, in the line
 Of ancient rule, must meet no opposing will,
 Reigning by law, and just prerogative.
 But kings may cancel laws,—even as their crowns
 Are worn in solemn state, and glorious show,
 On coronation days,—and then left off
 To darkness and disuse. One gloomy king
 Would vainly place his chair beneath the shade
 Of blighting Rome, which by unnumbered roots
 Sucks up the wealth of half the earth ; and where
 No plant can flourish so, as poisons do :
 The spotted arum peering 'neath old trees,
 Luxuriant in its stem and scarlet beads,
 So bursts the exhausted soil. And then the Church,

That taught obedience, could no more obey
 The prince's mandate ; and her holy men,
 Under the throne's dread frown, and awful shade,
 Passed to the traitors' towers ; yet, as they passed
 Not reft of consolations ; kneeling streets
 Begged blessings from them, and their own good
 hearts

Told them the way was straight, and that Ged's will
 Had honoured them, to make their virtuous breasts
 The bulwark of the truth, and sacred laws
 Which English reason had fair written out,
 With cautious thought, in generations lapse,—
 Guardians of rightful freedom, interposed
 Between a tyrant power, and license bold,
 In Holy Office subject to kings' laws,
 But by those laws alone learning their will,—
 The stay of monarchy, religion's crown,
 Pursuing all men's good, and no man's harm.
 Yet, when the judgment-seat, and men their peers,—
 (If such in those degrees could have their peers)—
 Had cleared their innocence, and set them free,
 Doubtless they sorrowed more, because their king
 Looked down, with mind so dark, upon a realm
 So great and fair, than heard with sympathy
 The joy that rang their freedom ; humbled belike,
 Because in him, a nursing father crowned,
 The children of the Church had found no love,
 Whom she 'd made princes in his own fair land.
 For, would we try the temper of such souls,
 'Twas manifest when soon the infatuate king
 Threw England's seal away,—renounced his reign,—
 And a new monarch of his grandsire's blood,
 Was, with the female line, preferred, and throned.

Their pure and childlike innocence refused
 An oath, with sanction from all England's state,
 To serve another prince, in lieu of him
 Who justly forfeited. They rather glad
 Descended down from high cathedral thrones,
 And lived obscure, with holy books, and pens,
 And discipline,—in piety and peace,—
 By streams and woods, unnoticed 'midst the flock,
 And soothed by the harmony of a quiet mind.

Then laxer laws prevailed, and what was given
 In mild indulgence, to win stubborn wills,—
 Or, the abused and ignorant,—men learned
 To call a principle in England's state,
 And claimed a right, where they had got a boon.
 For gratitude is weak in human hearts—
 (But that of politics is only words)—
 And self so strong, he thrusts her out of door,—
 Or, shameless, takes her costly burthen up,
 Like a bold cheat outfacing her complaint.
 And so, men now were more solicitous
 To evade the stern severity of truth,
 And to repress her voice, than firm to walk
 Upon her bare and narrow way. To assert
 In its integrity her cause, demands
 A heart prepared to feel dark slander's shafts,
 At rich men's feasts and tables shot secure,
 And meet the cold eyes of the ignorant, prone
 To base suspicions ;—where we grope 't the dark,
 We fear most danger, and most feel alarm.
 And still, the while, the Saered House cast wide
 Her crumbling fragments,—and the ruin hid
 Her fast foundations ;—and she seemed to fill
 Her lawful precincture with ampler breadth,

But 'twas her own decay that spread so wide,—
Where statesmen's suffragants would stoop their
heads,

And burrow safe, and still refuse to see
For other times, so they might rule their hour ;
And, to maintain the wisdom of the Church,
Or error brand, was lack of charity.

With all her doctrine long adulterate,
Her voice suppressed, her forms depraved or changed,
Her honour perished, her authority
As one to guide the scoff of revellers lewd,—
And oft usurped by her own priests, who ruled
With praise, by spurning at her sacred laws
And those who held them with too weak a hand,—
The Church, a helpless widow, sat despised.
And then arose bold Whitfield's vehemence,
And Wesley's guile, with whom 'twas principle,
That men need have no principle, who yield
Their souls to feelings by his art inspired ;—
Arch-heretics, who, in the Church's sides,
Have left deep wounds, and in her feet
Planted sharp thorns of anguish, festering,
Even at this painful hour. Her trusts they sought,
And then, with viper's fang, venom'd her breast,
Regardless of their vows and fealty.

But yet 'tis not too late ; in every age,
Co-ordinate with man's her life has been
Trial, and penance ; so it hath seemed best
To Him who knows, that earth's securities
Are not the spirit's safety. Still the Church
Must toil, and suffer,—danger fear,—and wield
Her arms defensive, warring strenuously,
As truth alone can war, with lust, the world,

And error. Virtue lost, her light is quenched,—
 Disorder throws her shining pillars down,
 And low she lies on the deserted shore.
 The force, or wiles of enemies, whet the edge
 Of argument to keenness,—add more weight
 To its strong hammers faced with thicker steel,
 And by more frequent exercise inure
 Her arm to dexterous cunning. When a plague
 Visits a nation, the physician then
 Assumes a care, and active diligence,
 More healthful times required not,—wiser grows,—
 More faithful seems,—worth many other men ;
 But yet, a good we were unwise to call
 The pestilence, which drew his efforts forth.

And so thy Catholic sons, O holiest Church
 Of all the world, now vindicate thy faith,
 And thy integrity of worship pure.
 Thus ever he, who guides and feeds the flock,
 From the Atlantic's roar on Rathlin's steeps,
 To the still sheen of Neagh's inner sea,
 And round where Mourne stretches his serried ridge,
 And overlooks the shores, hath duteous taught
 The doctrine and the discipline of Christ.
 And all the words, and laws of Holy Church
 Shall have our reverence, as hers of right,—
 The wisdom, weighed, and stored from age to age,
 And tested through all time, and gathered safe,
 With mighty cost, into her treasury,—
 Nor e'er unmeet, unless to ignorant eyes :
 So shine and move the planets' silver fires,
 That seem to wander, yet are bound by laws
 Simple, direct, and sure,—and yielding life
 And health, we well may think, to creatures there ;

And all the works of God, are found, the more
 We know, conformed to some appropriate end,
 However strange at first their modes appear,
 Or useless their existence. Hence His voice,
 As heard in Holy Church, shall bind our will,
 And we will glean her words, and yield our own,—
 Walk in her ways, and build life by her rule
 In all our ministries, and with the world.

And though our modes of order are beneath
 The Objects of our faith,—low linked to earth,—
 Yet are they sacred, seeing where they're worn ;
 As the shoe's latchet, which the zealous John
 Might not unloose,—so he esteemed himself ;—
 Yet are they all obedience ;—and, of faith,
 And of an humble mind they well may be
 The issues, and the exercise ; and so
 Are excellent religion. Thus we have learned
 In part—and but in part as yet—of thee,
 Thou faithful Prelate ! Courty Wykeham's walls
 Fostered thy youth to strenuous wisdom well.
 Him the strict rules of a high kingly art
 Had formed to mental beauty, and the love
 Of truth severe, and learning's generous toil ;
 And from that sacred hearth, thy early mind
 Its ready fuel kindled ; whence, the light
 Of thy rich knowledge and strong sense
 Flashed clear on cowering error ; and she fled
 With eye reverted, to the dens of night.
 And order thou didst love, the faith of vows,
 And holy discipline ; and thou didst strive
 To win, and lead, and bind men to their pledge,
 And wast their example ; and thy studies all
 And cares were drawn that way. And thou dost sit

Throned in the Irish Church, a prince of Christ,
 Father of ministries, with wholesome rule ;
 Firm, and to some austere ; to others mild
 And gracious, if their zeal and work go on
 Accordant with the Church's will and thine.
 And thou hast sometimes ta'en the Psalmist's lyre,
 And tuned his harmonies to English verse,
 With learned skill exploring his intent.
 Thine are the British Fasti, and "the Months"
 Traced through the seasons' change by growth of
 plants,
 Fair nature's rubric calendar ; so some
 Have found a way, by flowers that close and ope
 With various watch, to mark the trackless sun.
 Thine is a solemn music ; tempered all,
 As best became, by strains of heavenly faith,
 And breath of chastened piety serene.
 At other times,—for never fails thy use
 Of learned toil,—thou hast enriched thy page
 With Christian morals, and with cburchman's lore ;
 And marshalled the array from age to age
 Of clear, historic narrative ; that men
 May, sitting at the feet of ages past,
 Learn wisdom from experience old and sage ;
 For so the world improves, and we still build
 To advantage on the skill our fathers knew.
 Regard then, virtuous Prelate, work of mine ;
 And as thou hast proved thyself poetic toil,
 I shall not fail thy sympathy ; for thou
 Hast gentle thoughts, I ween, for all who strive
 In learning's paths, or dig her dubious mine.
 And if my hand hath struck some gentle light,
 As shines a torch in dim stalactite cave

'Midst splendours wan, and only half revealed,
 'Tis what I sought, and all that hope presumed.
 But if a shadow vainly hath amused
 My lonely hours, 'twas what I could, to trace
 Its features out by pen and smoky lamp,
 And it must die before the light of noon.

And now, O sacred Mother, fare thee well !
 Long mayest thou glide upon the waves of time
 A beacon to the nations, and an ark
 Of refuge for the truth and lawful rule.
 For, with thee bides the delegated grace
 Of public ministries,—derived from those
 Who touched the wounded hands and glorious feet
 Of the Almighty,—heard His solemn words
 Of high commission,—and His promise sure
 Of gracious presence till the world's great close.
 All thy instruction, built on highest ground
 Of baptized reason, gently moulds the soul,
 By doctrine known to all men, in all lands,
 While yet the Church was one. Thy liturgies,
 In language of God's Word, bespeak His love
 With voice inspired. Thy sons in all the world
 Rejoice in truth, and mercy for mankind,
 And even heathen nations have a wont
 To bind their faith, invoking England's name.

And now thou goest, with hope of good success,
 Upon the waves, to other lands afar ;
 As the fair moon, to shine with borrowed light
 In the ordered circles of thy ministries,
 And pour thy brightness on the eastern climes
 Whence first it rose : and towards the Antarctic pole
 Thou voyagest, to men savage and fell
 Beyond the original vice of nature's law :
 Blest be thy glorious mission through the world !

